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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Are you ready? Disasters happen.  
Make sure you are ready to protect your family.**

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO – This year the U.S. watched as communities in more than half of our nation’s states fought measles epidemics. Some families were quarantined in their homes for weeks, while others faced unexpected medical bills.

As part of National Preparedness Month this September, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) urges residents to take action now to prevent disease outbreaks in their communities, and consider family health needs as they prepare their emergency kits and plans.

“You can help prevent a disease outbreak in your community by making sure you and your family are up to date on your immunizations and by practicing healthy hand hygiene,” said Tanis Maxwell, SCPHD Epidemiologist. “If we face a large-scale disaster we might not have access to clean water, dry shelter and other things we take for granted. Preparations, like immunizations, will go a long way in protecting your family.”

It’s also important to check your 72 hour emergency kit to make sure you’ve stocked extra medication, water cleaning tablets, epi pens, and hand sanitizer. If you, or a loved one, are dependent on electrical medical equipment make sure you have a backup plan to handle a sudden loss of power.

“Remember, in an emergency you might not have time to pack anything extra,” said Nelson Long, SCPHD Training and Exercise Coordinator. “Your emergency kit should have everything your family needs to stay healthy until you can go back to your home.”

If you have any questions about making an emergency plan, or the broader plans in your county, please reach out to your local County Emergency Manager:

For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/phpr/npm/npm2018.htm>