



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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‘Are you prepared for a disaster?’ Commissaries ask patrons to stock up – just in case

*By Kevin L. Robinson,
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NOTE: Visit http://www.commissaries.com/disaster_prep.cfm to access DeCA’s disaster preparedness webpage.

FORT LEE, Va. – Weather forecasters are predicting an unusually active hurricane season for the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

“Are you prepared?”

That’s the question the Defense Commissary Agency is asking its customers as it advises them to make sure they have enough supplies to withstand a potential disaster.

“Often, we get lulled into a false sense of ‘this won’t happen to us’ when it comes to being prepared for the worst,” said Tom Milks, DeCA deputy director and chief operating officer. “But the lessons learned from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina still hold true five years later.

“We are asking our customers to check the emergency supplies in their households so that they’re ready for any event – whether it’s a natural or manmade disaster,” he said. “As they take stock, we want them to remember that most of what they’ll need is available at their commissary at savings of 30 percent or more.”

Milks said the commissary is a good place to start when it comes to planning for the expected – graduation parties and summertime barbecues – or the unexpected. Although the

Atlantic hurricane season begins June 1, Mother Nature has already wreaked havoc inland with devastating tornadoes in Oklahoma and Mississippi and severe flooding in Tennessee, Mississippi and Kentucky.

DeCA's 2010 summer club pack program – running from July 1 to Sept. 30 – features products that meet the seasonal needs of commissary customers. The program also includes products appropriate for hurricane and tornado preparedness: food and beverages that don't require refrigeration, flashlights, lanterns and emergency candles. This section will be displayed in stores an additional month, through Oct. 31. Commissaries are also offering summer water truckload events to help customers stock up.

“Club packs are popular because they allow customers to buy items in bulk sizes similar to what they'd see in a commercial warehouse club outlet,” said Charlie Dowlen, DeCA promotions manager. “From past experience we've seen people use club packs to prepare for bad weather events.”

With the coming of the Atlantic hurricane season, the National Weather Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency recommend creating a disaster supply kit –

http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/disaster_prevention.shtml – that should include the following items:

- Water – at least 1 gallon daily per person for three to seven days.
- Food – nonperishable packaged or canned food and juices, foods for infants or the elderly, snack foods, nonelectric can opener, cooking tools, fuel, paper plates and plastic utensils.
- Blankets and pillows.
- Clothing – seasonal, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
- First aid kit, medicines and prescription drugs.
- Special items – for babies and elderly.
- Toiletries, hygiene items and moisture wipes.
- Flashlight and batteries.
- Radio – battery operated and NOAA weather radio.
- Telephones – fully charged cell phone with extra battery and a traditional (not cordless) telephone set.
- Cash (with some small bills) and credit cards – banks and ATMs may not be available for extended periods.

- Important documents – in a waterproof container or watertight resealable bag.
- Tools.
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled.
- Pet care items – proper identification, immunization records, medications, ample supply of food and water, a carrier or cage, and muzzle and leash.

For more information on disaster preparedness, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency Web site: www.fema.gov; the Department of Homeland Security Web site: www.dhs.gov; and the American Red Cross Web site: www.redcross.org.

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About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,300 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*