

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Summit County observes Preparedness and Recovery Months

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Summit County Executive Shapiro and County Council passed legislation recognizing September as Preparedness Month and Recovery Month.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recognized National Preparedness Month annually since 2004 to heighten the abilities of communities to respond swiftly and effectively to disasters and emergencies. Disasters and emergencies include natural occurrences, such as floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and pandemics, as well as man-made hazards, such as chemical spills and terrorism. With the damaging impact of severe storms in early August, it is more important than ever to ensure our residents are prepared to protect themselves and their family's physical safety, as well as their homes and belongings.

The Summit County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) has several resources for residents to prepare themselves and their families for an emergency. First, residents are encouraged to download the [EMA App](#) to receive alerts and create an emergency plan that is shareable with family and friends. Residents may also sign up for [Reverse Alerts](#) via phone, email, or devices for those who are hard of hearing. Second, residents can visit Summit County EMA's [website](#) to learn about how the agency works and opportunities for residents to learn. Among EMA's duties are developing plans for schools to respond to crises, to operate or aid communities in operating emergency responses, and offering training to public safety departments across Summit County. Lastly, EMA has launched "Summit Ready," a free and voluntary emergency management certification program for all 31 communities in Summit County. Certified communities will be listed on EMA's website.

"From getting the message out about traveling during the April 8 solar eclipse to collecting damage assessment data to send to Ohio EMA, our public safety team does a great job to help keep our residents safe," said Executive Shapiro. "But it takes all of us to listen to these important messages, make a plan and prepare accordingly, and keep our families informed when an emergency strikes."

September is also Recovery Month, an observance sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to emphasize that recover from mental health and substance use disorders is achievable and should be celebrated, not stigmatized. Prevention, treatment, and recovery are core tenets for both the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health (ADM) Board and the Opiate Abatement Advisory Council. To access recovery resources, visit <https://admbord.org/get-help/adults/substance-use/>

This year's theme is the "Art of Recovery," recognizing the transformative impact of art on mental health and substance use recovery and the ability of creative expression to help individuals find connection, healing, and empowerment. Summit Artspace has shared this vision once again through its Overdose Awareness Exhibition in partnership with Summit County Public Health. This exhibit showcases art exploring personal experiences with overdose and addiction, honoring loved ones who have died without stigma, and acknowledging the grief of those mourning loved ones. The exhibit is currently on display through September 14, 2024, at 140 E Market St, Akron.

"I encourage everyone at some point during this month to take a moment and reflect on the many lives affected by substance use disorder," said Executive Shapiro. "Whether its visiting Summit Artspace's exhibit or talking frankly with a close friend, these small moments can lead to big impacts when it comes to removing the stigma of substance use and recovery and ultimately can help save lives."

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