

COLUMBIA COUNTY



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PRESS RELEASE

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COLUMBIA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NOW HAS BLOG and TWITTER PAGES

Columbia County Emergency Management is reaching out to citizens using new forms of media.

The agency, which deals with local disaster preparedness and response planning, has recently started using a blog that it will use to provide updated information about preparedness and disaster information to the citizens of Columbia County. The agency is also using Twitter, a free service that allows people and agencies to provide updates online that people can monitor from their computers or cell phones.

Vicki Harguth, Director of Columbia County Emergency Management, said that it is important to use every available tool in order to reach people. "Our goal is to make sure people and businesses are as prepared as they can be for disasters. These websites allow us to get important information out to folks so that they will be ready to respond to help themselves, their neighbors, family and friends when major emergencies come our way", said Harguth.

Harguth noted that Columbia County is vulnerable to various types of hazards, from severe winter storms to earthquakes.

"Citizens need to know not only what we are doing to prepare for emergencies, but also what they can do to protect themselves. Government is affected by disasters as well and it is important that folks have plans and kits in place to take care of themselves in the first hours to days of a disaster", Derek White, Emergency Management Coordinator, added.

Both the blog and Twitter sites will be updated regularly. The agency is also considering using Facebook and MySpace in the future to reach additional people.

The Columbia County blog can be found at <http://columbiacountyem.blogspot.com/> . The Twitter page can be found at <http://twitter.com/columbiacoem> .