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**National Preparedness Month Observed for Eleventh Year;
Second Annual Movie Night on September 26 Inspires Discussion**

Brewster, NY—More than a decade has passed since the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and still the majority of Americans remain unprepared for most types of disaster. Only 39 percent of people have a plan and have discussed it with their family, reports the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and only 29 percent have an up-to-date disaster-supply kit at home. This September is the 11th observation of National Preparedness Month and county agencies are promoting the new FEMA approach—to ask people to take one first step and make a family communication plan.

“Discussing with family members and knowing how you will reconnect should a problem arise is a smart first step,” County Executive MaryEllen Odell advises. “It reduces one of the biggest worries and there is little cost and time involved,” she added.

Created to spur on this conversation, an annual family Movie Night for National Preparedness Month was launched last year by the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) and the Bureau of Emergency Services (BES). This year’s second annual free event, scheduled for Friday night September 26 at the BES’s “TOPS” building, 112 Old Route Six in Carmel, will feature a showing of the theatrical release movie World War Z, rated PG-13, and a sampling of emergency food recipes put together by the PCDOH. A free raffle for a top-of-the

line crank radio and carbon monoxide detectors will also be held. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.;
showtime is 7 p.m.

Most people view emergency preparedness as a large undertaking, but being informed and having emergency supplies on hand are two other steps, that when tackled one at a time, can make a big difference.

“NY Alert is a free service available from the State of New York that provides both local and state announcements,” explains Adam B. Stiebeling, Commissioner of BES. By signing up, residents can get real-time information about current threats delivered to their cell phones, email or via the web, however they prefer. Individuals sign up at www.nyalert.gov and can customize what types of information they wish to receive and how they want to get them. Selected alerts can be modified or cancelled at the subscribers request whenever they wish. Personal information is completely protected and never shared.

“Stocking an emergency kit is a relatively easy step that can save major difficulties later on,” says Allen Beals, MD, Commissioner of Health. “Unfortunately it is not usually the top priority for most people. We urge everyone to make a communications plan and be informed and have supplies on hand.”

The Health Department’s mission is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit the PCDOH website at www.putnamcountyny.com/health or visit the social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

The Bureau of Emergency Services of Putnam County keeps county residents safe from harm, by providing services to all fire, EMS and related emergency management initiatives. This includes training and equipping special teams for fire investigation, fire police response and hazardous materials mitigation, and a credible assessment team (CAT). Additionally the BES maintains a countywide communications system and continually seeks ways to improve response to both natural and manmade disasters.