

## Media Relations

# UNH Public Administration Student Helps Prepare Hooksett For Disasters

Kick-Off Event Set For Sept. 1 At Town Library

August 30, 2010



DURHAM, N.H. – When Barb Stadtmiller took a homeland security class as part of her master’s in public administration from the University of New Hampshire, the discussion about the need for local and individual preparedness resonated with her.

Like many Granite Staters, she remembered all too well that many stores ran out of flashlights, batteries and gas cans in the December 2008 ice storm when communities were out of power for up to two weeks. So when Stadtmiller considered projects for her graduate fellowship, she decided to launch a drive encouraging Hooksett businesses and households to stock and maintain emergency preparedness kits.

“We live in a ‘just-in-time’ society that cannot always keep up after an emergency. Preparing a disaster supplies kit can reduce the overwhelming demand for certain supplies and limit the number of citizens on potentially dangerous roadways,” Stadtmiller said.

“I have childhood memories of a blizzard that knocked the power out for a few days. We knew it was coming, so my mom got out all the kerosene lamps and candles, she filled jugs of water from the well, and on day three I awoke to the smell of frying steaks for breakfast. She decided everything in the freezer had to be eaten that day or be thrown out. We were prepared, and the week was like a pioneering vacation,” she said.

Working with the Town of Hooksett and its emergency preparedness officials, Stadtmiller organized a disaster supplies kit effort, with the goal to have a disaster supplies kit in every home and office.

Stadtmiller and Hooksett officials plan to roll out their effort Sept. 1, 2010, which begins National Preparedness Month. The effort kicks off at the Hooksett Library from 4 to 6 p.m. Informational brochures will be available, and staff will be prepared to answer questions. Other events include a table at the Sept. 8 Farmer’s Market and at Hooksett Old Home Day at the end of that month.

“No one can truly know if this winter will bring blizzards and ice storms, if we will endure another spring of record floods, or if an unthought-of disaster will strike. But we can all have more peace of mind if we know that we have the supplies we need when the power goes out, the roads close, or the stores run low,” she said.

Stadtmiller is hopeful that the effort also will inspire residents to take additional precautions such as checking fire and carbon monoxide alarms, signing up for local emergency broadcasts like CodeRed, and learning about local hazards and prevention measures. Dan Pike, Hooksett’s director of emergency management, works with state and federal officials to keep the town informed about local hazards and warnings.

“There is an endless amount of information coming in from federal and state agencies, health officials, and

 	
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Barb Stadtmiller, a graduate student in public administration at the University of New Hampshire, worked with Dan Pike, director of emergency management with the Town of Hooksett, as part of her graduate studies.

the weather service," Pike said. "One of my jobs is to determine the level of importance of this information and focus on what matters to those in the Hooksett area."

"Preparedness is the foundation upon which emergency management is built," Pike said. "By developing a disaster kit, families, and individuals become less reliant upon emergency services that can be quickly overwhelmed during a crisis situation. Barbara's effort in assisting town residents with preplanning for a disaster will not only benefit the community, but the entire region as well."

Stadtmiller will graduate with her MPA this year and is committed to making communities safer, more sustainable, and more connected. She said she has particularly enjoyed the diversity of the MPA program, which combines management theory and statistical analysis techniques taught by full-time professors and the practical applications of public administration taught by adjunct faculty.

"Every family cannot build a bunker in the backyard, but in class, we covered a number of initiatives that individuals and local groups can take to buy some time before an official response arrives. These initiatives can provide peace of mind and often save lives," said Stadtmiller in discussing the class on homeland security.

The Hooksett Office of Emergency Management can be reached by calling (603) 627-3577 or e-mailing Dan Pike at [dpike@hooksett.org](mailto:dpike@hooksett.org).

Since 1963, the UNH master's in public administration program has trained and educated public service and nonprofit professionals in New Hampshire and the New England region. It is the only MPA program in New Hampshire. For more information visit <http://www.unh.edu/political-science/index.cfm?id=4305E8C0-9D71-14BE-CA9566C72B0BF137>.

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#### **VIDEO**

<http://www.vimeo.com/14272954>

Barb Stadtmiller, a graduate student in public administration at the University of New Hampshire, discusses her effort to launch a drive to provide Hooksett businesses and households with emergency preparedness kits.

#### **PHOTO**

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<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/hooksett.jpg>

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T-hall

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