COLUMBUS FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
Emergency Management Division
"Quality People Providing Quality Service"

510 I0TH Street
Columbus, Georgia 31901
(706) 653-3500 Fax (706) 653-3504

Teresa Tomlinson
Mayor/Director of Public Safety

Jeff Meyer
Chief/EMA Director

Columbus Fire & EMS-Emergency Management Division Media Release

09/28/2011

Announcing the App that Prepares You for an Emergency and Guides You to Safety

(ATLANTA) To make emergency preparation more accessible, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (GEMA) and Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) have partnered to create the *Ready Georgia* mobile app. The free app, available for both iPhone and Android devices, supports *Ready Georgia*'s mission to encourage residents to prepare, plan and stay informed for emergencies. From up-to-the-minute weather and hazard alerts based on a user's location, to customizable emergency preparedness checklists, the app combines a robust set of features not previously available in one mobile application.

"Preparation is key to surviving disasters, and the *Ready Georgia* mobile app makes it easier than ever for Georgians to get prepared, just in time for National Preparedness Month, which runs through September," said GEMA Director Charley English. "If you're shopping for emergency supplies, you have a checklist in your pocket. If you see storm clouds, you can check weather alerts. You can even pull up a local map to see if a shelter has been opened in your community."

Before an emergency, users will be able to create customizable checklists of emergency supplies, make disaster plans for their families and check flood risk levels and historic tornado data near their location. During an emergency, the app will deliver severe weather alerts, show the locations of open Red Cross shelters and provide information on what to do during different types of disasters.

In addition to localized severe weather alerts, users will also receive alerts from GEMA and DPH in the event of other emergencies, such as terrorist attacks, infectious diseases or biological threats.

"Diseases spread fast and the need to reach people in real time with life-saving information is more important than ever," said Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D., Commissioner of DPH. "The *Ready Georgia* mobile app gives us the ability to instantly deliver potentially life-saving information to almost anyone with a smartphone."

Despite all the extreme weather in 2011, a majority of Georgians are still not fully prepared for an emergency, according to a recent study from GEMA. According to the GEMA survey, 53 percent of households aware of *Ready Georgia* are more prepared to survive a disaster than those who are unaware of the campaign. With the number of smartphone users expected to grow 55 percent in 2011, the mobile app offers an opportunity to engage a large number of residents in a new way.

Residents can also visit the *Ready Georgia* website, www.ready.ga.gov, to learn how to prepare for emergencies.

Key App Features

- A customizable Ready Profile featuring a checklist of emergency supplies and a family disaster plan.
- Live weather, disaster and public health alerts delivered based on your location.
- Flooding threat assessment based upon location and stream gauges.
- Alerts include info on what to do in the event of each emergency.
- Map of nearby active Red Cross shelters during emergencies.
- Flood risk levels based on current location.
- Map of historic tornado strikes in Georgia, plus list of all major disasters to strike current location.

- Information on how to prepare for different threats and local contacts to help.
- Hazard trivia for every day of the year.

More information: http://www.ready.ga.gov/mobileapp

About Ready Georgia
Ready Georgia is a statewide campaign that educates and empowers Georgians to prepare for and respond to natural disasters, pandemic outbreaks, potential terrorist attacks and other large-scale emergencies. The campaign is a project of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA)/Homeland Security and provides a local dimension to *Ready America*, a broader national campaign. *Ready Georgia* prepares residents for maintaining self-sufficiency for at least three days following an emergency and uses an interactive website, online community toolkit, advertising and public awareness media messaging to reach its audiences. For more information visit ready.ga.govor find *Ready Georgia* at Facebook.com/ReadyGAand YouTube.com/ReadyGAfromGEMA.

Contact:
Jama Singley
Emergency Management Agency Planner
Columbus Fire & EMS
706-225-4073
706-653-3271 fax
jsingley@columbusga.org