

August 1997

Dear Packet Recipient,

As you may know, each year the United States experiences more severe weather than any other country in the world. More than 10,000 violent thunderstorms, 5,000 floods and 1,000 tornadoes leave their mark annually. That doesn't include earthquakes, volcanoes, and many other natural disasters. While we can't prevent the disasters, each of us can take steps to minimize the impacts these disasters may have on our families, homes and businesses. And we need your help to get the word out!

That's what World Disaster Reduction Day is all about. World Disaster Reduction Day was launched by the UN General Assembly in 1990, as an important element of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. This year World Disaster Reduction Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness worldwide that natural risks can be managed, falls on October 8, 1997. The official theme is *Water — Too much, too little: The leading cause of natural disasters.* This campaign focuses on the socioeconomic impact of water-related natural disasters such as floods and droughts.

Without water, life is not possible; water is a source of life. At the same time, too much water is dangerous. Too much or too little water is also the most common feature of natural disasters. Coastal and river flooding, for example, are the most frequent natural disasters and are increasing more rapidly than any other disaster. Drought, on the other hand, is still the disaster that affects more people than any other. But we can take steps to reduce the impacts of these types of events.

What are these steps? We've included some of the highlights in this special press packet. It includes a wealth of flood/drought information as well as other significant natural hazard materials and fact sheets. For more information on safety and preparedness tips, statistics on recent flooding and drought events look for a list of relevant web sites in this packet.

It's a story that will help make your community safer before disaster strikes.

Sincerely yours,

The Inter-agency Committee





Contact:

# Public Service Announcement

:30: WITHIN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, BILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND HUNDREDS OF LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE AFTERMATH OF FLOODS, HURRICANES, TORNADOES AND EARTHQUAKES IN THE U.S.

NATURAL DISASTERS ARE A FACT OF LIFE, YET FEW ARE READY TO DEAL WITH THEM.

ON OCTOBER 8TH, A COALITION OF FEDERAL AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WILL MARK WORLD DISASTER REDUCTION DAY WITH EFFORTS AIMED AT SHOWING THE PUBLIC HOW TO PREPARE BEFORE DISASTERS STRIKE.

MORE INFORMATION ON WORLD DISASTER REDUCTION DAY IS AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET AT [WWW.FEMA.GOV](http://WWW.FEMA.GOV).

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