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New Campaign Urges Families to Twitter for Safety

“Pledge to Drill” Program Aims at Using Social Media Tools and Text Messaging to Communicate in an Emergency

Atlanta, August 11, 2009 – The Safe America Foundation today announced “Pledge to Drill,” an awareness campaign aimed at teaching families how to use social networking tools to communicate during a national disaster or emergency.

Led by Norman Y. Mineta, former U.S. Secretary of Transportation, “Pledge to Drill” focuses on the communications during times of national crisis. The campaign urges all citizens to plan how social media tools like Twitter and Facebook, and text messaging, can help them to notify family and friends where they are and communicate even if traditional communication networks are unavailable.

Sign Up to “Pledge to Drill”

As part of this, between now and Sept. 11, the Safe America Foundation is asking people to sign up online at www.safeamericaprepared.org to pledge to sit down on 9/11 and develop an action plan for communicating during a disaster. Already, companies like UPS, Motorola and Office Depot have “Pledged to Drill” on 9/11 with their employees.

“Stockpiling food and water during a crisis is critical, but we also want families to think about their communication methods – if phone lines are down, or networks go offline, how will they get in touch with loved ones? We want families to plan how they will communicate, and to have the tools like Twitter and Facebook loaded into their phones and mobile devices so they can be ready,” said Secretary Mineta.

Tips for Communicating in an Emergency

On 9/11, “Pledge to Drill” wants families to sit down and plan for an emergency, taking steps such as:

- Pre-load emergency URLs and messages to their mobile devices
- Set up text messaging templates that can speed up communications
- Plan for different methods of communications in the event of an emergency

Corporations Have “Pledged to Drill” on 9/11

To kick off the campaign, UPS, Motorola and Office Depot have “Pledged to Drill” on 9/11 with their employees, enacting scenarios onsite aimed at emergency preparedness and communications. The companies are also encouraging employees to “Pledge to Drill” at home with their families on 9/11 to discuss and plan emergency communications.

“We hope a national disaster never occurs, but if it does, we want families to be ready and prepared,” said Len Pagano, executive director of the Safe America Foundation. “We hope everyone “Pledges to Drill” on 9/11 so that if a crisis occurs, everyone has at their fingertips the best way to communicate, whether by Twittering on their Smartphone, texting or posting an online message.”

To “Pledge to Drill,” and get a complete list of tips and advice from the Safe America Foundation, families can visit www.safeamericaprepared.com, or visit the Safe America Foundation on Facebook.

About the Safe America Foundation

The Safe America Foundation is a non-profit organization based in Marietta, Ga., that develops programs and informational campaigns to improve the safety awareness and preparedness of Americans nationwide. The Safe America Foundation partners with civic organizations, government and corporations to promote a Safer America.™ For more information, please visit www.safeamerica.org.