

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

**Steve Stern**

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## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### JEEP PROGRAM PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EMERGENCIES

#### *Legislator Stern Urges Those Eligible to Enroll*

**Huntington, NY-** Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern (D-Huntington) 16<sup>th</sup> L.D., Chairman of the Veterans and Seniors Committee is urging Suffolk County residents to register with the Suffolk County Department of Fire Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES) Joint Emergency Evacuation Program (JEEP) which provides shelter and transportation assistance for people with disabilities who have no other way to evacuate their homes in the event of a natural disaster or emergency.

JEEP is available to those who are disabled and unable to leave their homes without emergency assistance. Residents must apply for this service. To obtain an application, please call FRES at (631) 852-4900, or the Office for People with Disabilities at (631) 853-8333 (voice) or (631) 853-5658 (TTY), or visit the county webpage, [www.suffolkcountyny.gov](http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov) and click on the J.E.E.P. icon.

Seniors, people with disabilities and their families may need to take additional steps to prepare for emergencies. The following recommendations can help keep you and your loved ones safe:

- Keep a 7-14 day supply of necessary medications on hand at all times.
- Develop a personal emergency plan for each place where you spend time – at home, work, school, and in the community. Include contact information for family, friends, neighbors, physicians and home care services.
- If you are dependent on electric for life sustaining devices or mobility, plan for a loss of power. Contact LIPA “Critical Care Program” to report life-support equipment by calling **1-800-490-0025**.
- The hearing impaired may need to make special arrangements to make sure they receive emergency warnings. You can sign up to receive Emergency Notifications of an actual or impending emergency at the **CODERED** link provided at the county’s website listed above. Those without Internet access may

call the **Office of Emergency Management's Customer Service Center** at **(631) 852-4900 Mon.-Fri., 9am to 5pm** to supply their information over the phone.

- People with special dietary needs should have an adequate emergency food supply.
- If you have a service animal, make sure that it is registered for a service tag.
- Individuals with cognitive disabilities can be voluntarily registered with the Suffolk Police Departments **"Silver Alert"** program. The intention of this program is to have this information furnished to police officers who may be responding to an emergency situation involving that person so that they can better care for the person's needs.

"Our emergency first responders won't necessarily know where residents in need of special assistance are during an emergency and it is imperative for those with disabilities to register for the J.E.E.P. Program so that those in need are identified ahead of time," Legislator Stern warned. "Unfortunately, we have all witnessed the scenes of disabled and elderly residents trapped in the rising floodwaters in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and we all certainly hope never to witness such tragedy again. The J.E.E.P. program provides peace of mind to residents and their families and I strongly encourage all who are eligible to apply and to take all other steps necessary to be prepared in the event of a natural disaster."

#End#