

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency Preparedness

The following information is an accumulation of recommendations from FEMA, the American Red Cross, and other agencies around the world. This is a general preparedness for any type of manmade or natural disaster.

Create an Emergency Plan

Meet with household members. Discuss with children the dangers of fire, severe weather, and other emergencies.

Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.

Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two (2) escape routes from each room

Learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches.

Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones.

Teach children how and when to call 911, police, and fire.

Instruct household members to turn on the radio for emergency information.

Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).

Teach children how to make long distance telephone calls.

Pick two (2) meeting places:

A place near your home in case of a fire.

A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster.

Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit

Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in an easy to carry container, such as a backpack or duffel bag. Include the following:

A supply of water (1 gallon per person, per day). Store in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six (6) months.

A supply of non-perishable, packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.

A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes.

Blankets or sleeping bags.

A first aid kit and prescription medications.

An extra pair of glasses.

A battery powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.

Credit cards and cash.

An extra set of car keys.

A list of family physicians.

A list of family prescriptions.

A list of important family information, the style and serial number of medical devices, such as pacemakers.

Special items for infants, elderly, or disable family members.

A cellular or digital telephone.

Escape Plan

In a fire or other emergency, you may need to evacuate your house, apartment, or mobile home on a moment's notice. You should be ready to get out fast.

Develop an escape plan by drawing a floor plan of your residence. Using a or blue pen, show the location of doors, windows, stairways, and large furniture. Indicate the location of emergency supplies (Disaster Supplies Kit), fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, collapsible ladders, first aid kits, and utility shut off points. Next, use a colored pen to draw a broken line charting at least two (2) escape routes from each room.

Finally, mark a place outside of the home where household members should meet in case of fire. Be sure to include important points outside, such as garages, patios, stairways, elevators, driveways, and porches. If your home has more than two (2) floors, use an additional sheet of paper.

Practice emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least twice a year.

Home Hazard Hunt

Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections.

Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products away from heat sources.

Place oily polishing rags or waste in covered metal cans.

Clean and repair chimneys, flue pipes, vent connectors, and gas vents.

Prepare an Emergency Car Kit

Battery powered radio and extra batteries

Flashlight and extra batteries

Blanket

Booster cables

Fire extinguisher (5lb.-A/B/C type)

First aid kit and manual

Bottled water and non-perishable high energy foods, such as granola bars, raisins and peanut butter

Maps

Shovel

Tire repair kit and pump

Flares

Cellular or digital telephone

Fire Safety

Plan two (2) escape routes out of each room.

Teach family members to stay low to the ground when escaping from a fire.

Teach family members never to open doors that are hot. In a fire, feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand. If it is hot, do not open the door. Find another way out!

Install smoke detectors. Clean and test smoke detectors once a month.

Change batteries at least once a year.

Keep a whistle in each bedroom to awaken household members in case of fire.

Check electrical outlets. Do not overload outlets.

Purchase a fire extinguisher (5lb., A/B/C type).

Have a collapsible ladder on each upper floor of your house.

Consider installing home sprinklers.

Generator Safety

Generators are often used during power outages. If not properly used and maintained, they can be extremely hazardous. When using a generator remember to:
Always read and follow the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines.
Only use a generator or other fuel-powered machines outside the home.
Carbon monoxide fumes released by generators are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.
Use the appropriate sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can over-heat and cause fires.
Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.
Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines.
The reverse flow of electricity or "back feed" can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Heating Safety

Research suggests more than one third of home fires in the United States occur during the winter months of December, January and February. One of the reasons these months pose a magnified fire threat is due to increased use of heating sources, such as chimneys and wood stoves.
Do not use the kitchen oven range to heat your home. In addition to being a fire hazard, it can be a source of toxic fumes.
Alternative heaters need their space. Keep anything combustible at least three (3) feet away.
Kerosene heaters may not be legal in your area and should only be used where approved by authorities.
Make sure your alternative heaters have "tip switches". These "tip switches" are designed to automatically turn off the heater in the event they tip over.
Only use the type of fuel recommended by the manufacturer and follow suggested guidelines.
Remember to keep all combustible liquids away from heat sources.
Never refill a space heater while it is operating or still hot.
Refuel heaters only outdoors.
Make sure wood stoves are properly installed and at least three (3) feet away from combustible materials. Ensure they have the proper floor support and adequate ventilation.
Use a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace to prevent sparks from igniting nearby carpets, furniture or other combustible items.
Prepare all heating devices prior to cold weather. Have them inspected and/or any maintenance that may be required; i.e., insure all flues/stove pipes are clear from bird nests, chimneys are clear of creosote accumulations, etc.)

Lighting Safety

Have plenty of flashlights and extra batteries on hand in case of a power outage.
Don't use candles for emergency lighting. It increases fire hazards within the home.

Cooking Safety

In case the power fails, plan to use alternative cooking devices in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
Never use open flames or grills indoors.

Never Stockpile Fuel or Flammable Liquids

For those who feel the need to stock disaster supplies, we remind you that it is extremely dangerous to stockpile any liquids fuels such as gasoline, kerosene or lantern fluid.

For any combustible/flammable liquid stored, be sure to have them in approved containers and stored appropriately. Never store kerosene/gasoline in glass containers.

Remember, Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

Some smoke alarms may be dependent on your home's electrical service and could be inoperative during a power outage. Check to see if your smoke alarm uses a back-up battery and install a new battery at least once a year.

Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home.

All smoke alarms should be tested monthly. All batteries should be replaced with new ones at least once a year.

A Disaster Kit Can Be Prepared and Kept on Hand for Many Situations (Ice Storm, Blizzard, Hurricane, Etc.)

Preparing A Disaster Kit

Review the checklist below.

Gather the supplies that are listed. You may need them if your family is confined at home.

Place the supplies you would most likely need for an evacuation in an easy to carry container. These supplies are listed with an asterisk(*).

*There are six (6) basics you should stock for your home:

- Water

- Food

- First Aid Supplies

- Clothing and Bedding

- Tools and Emergency Supplies

- Special Items

Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy to carry container such as:

- Large, covered trash container.

- Camping backpack.

- Duffel bag

Water

Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two (2) quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.

Store one (1) gallon of water per person/per day.

Keep at least a three (3) day supply of water per day (two (2) quarts for drinking, two (2) quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation).

Food

Store at least a three (3) day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. Select food items that are compact and lightweight.

Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supplies Kit

- Ready to eat canned meats

- Fruits

- Vegetables

First Aid Kit

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes

- Assorted sizes of safety pins

- Cleansing agent/soap

- Latex gloves (2 pairs)

- Sunscreen

- 2" sterile gauze pads (4-6)

- 4" sterile gauze pads (4-6)

- Triangular bandages (3)

- Non-prescription drugs

- 2" sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

- 3" sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

- Scissors

- Tweezers

- Needle

- Moistened towelettes

- Antiseptic

- Thermometer

- Tongue Blades (2)

- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

Non-Prescription Drugs

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever

- Anti-diarrhea medication

- Antacid (for stomach upset)

- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)

- Laxative

- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Tools and Supplies

- Mess kits or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils

- Emergency preparedness manual

- Battery operated radio and extra batteries

- Flashlight and extra batteries

- Cash or traveler's checks, change

- Non-electric can opener, utility knife

- Fire extinguisher, small canister A/B/C/ type

- Tube tent

- Pliers
- Tape
- Compass
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare
- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread
- Medicine dropper
- Shut-off wrench to turn off household gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of the area (for locating shelters)
- Sanitation
 - Toilet paper, towelettes
 - Soap, liquid detergent
 - Feminine supplies
 - Personal hygiene items
 - Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
 - Plastic bucket with tight lid
 - Disinfectant
 - Household chlorine bleach

Clothing and Bedding

Include at least one (1) complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Rain gear
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Hat and gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Sunglasses

Special Items

Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants, elderly, and disabled persons

For Baby

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered milk
- Medications

For Adults

- Heart and high blood pressure medication
- Insulin
- Prescription drugs

Denture needs
Contact lenses and supplies
Extra eyeglasses

Entertainment

Games
Books

Important Family Documents

Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container:

Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds.

Passports, social security cards, immunization records.

Bank account numbers.

Credit card account numbers and companies.

Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers.

Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates).

Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members.

Keep a smaller version of the Disaster Supplies Kit in the truck of your car.

Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Change your stored water supply every six (6) months, so it stays fresh. Replace your stored food every six (6) months. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.

Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.