

Your Family Disaster Plan

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere —



At work



At school



Or in the car

How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe?

Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services — water, gas, electricity or telephones — were cut off? Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away.

Families can— and do— cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps listed on this website to create your family's disaster plan. Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility.



EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags, or covered trash containers.

Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flash light and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and extra cash (small denominations and change).
- Sanitary supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of glasses.

UTILITIES

Locate the main electric breaker box, water service main and natural gas main. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.

Remember, turn off utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. ***If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.***

4 Steps to Safety

1

Find Out What Could Happen to You

Contact your local emergency management services or civil defense office and American Red Cross chapter—be prepared to take notes.

- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen. Request information on how to prepare for each.
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Ask about animal care after disaster. Animals may not be allowed inside emergency shelters due to health regulations.
- Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.
- Next, find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or daycare center and other places where your family spends time.

2

Create a Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet:
 1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

3

Complete This Checklist

- Post emergency telephones numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.)
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type), and show them where it is kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.

4

Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Quiz your children every six months so they remember what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Replace stored water every three months and stored food every six months.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you're a member of a neighborhood organization, such as home associations or crime watch group, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbor's special skills (e.g., medical, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as disabled and elderly persons. Make plans for child care in case parents can't get home.

HOME HAZARD HUNT

During a disaster, ordinary objects in your home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire is a home hazard. For example, a hot water heater or a bookshelf can fall. Inspect your home at least once a year and fix potential hazards.

Contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.

EVACUATION

Evacuate immediately if told to do so:

- Listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Lock your home.
- Use travel routes specified by local authorities—don't use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.

If you're sure you have time:

- Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving, if instructed to do so.
- Post a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Make arrangements for your pets.

YOUR FAMILY DISASTER PLAN—72-HOUR KIT

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere. And when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. A highway spill or hazardous materials incident could mean evacuation. A winter storm could confine your family at home. An earthquake, flood, tornado, or any other disaster could cut water, electricity and telephone for days.

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. Would your family be prepared to cope with the emergency until help arrives? Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility.

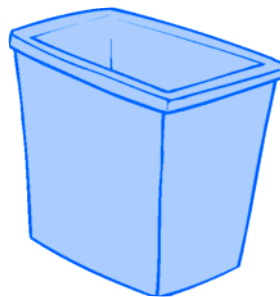
Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. One way is by assembling a **Disaster Supplies Kit**. Once disaster hits, you won't have time to shop or search for supplies. But if you've gathered supplies in advance, your family can endure an evacuation or home confinement.

Prepare Your Kit:

- Review the following checklist.
- Gather the supplies that are listed. You may need them if your family is confined at home.
- Place the supplies you'd most likely need for an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container.
- There are six basics you should stock for you home: water, food, first-aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items.

Possible Containers Include:

- A large, covered trash container
- A camping backpack
- A duffel bag
- A suitcase with rollers
- A large plastic bin with lid



Water

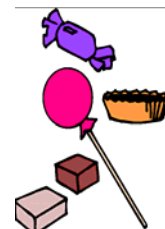
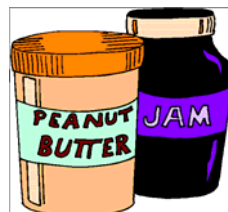
- Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need more.
- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation).
- Don't forget water for your pets.
- Treat all water if unsure of its purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene. Before treating, let any suspected particles settle to the bottom or strain through layers of paper towels or cloth. Water can be safely treated by:
 - Boiling for 10-12 minutes; or
 - Adding 6-10 drops of bleach per gallon of water (don't use color-safe bleach or ultra bleach. Use bleach labeled to contain 5.25% sodium hypochlorite). More bleach is not better, too much can make you ill.
- Rotate your water storage every six months.



Food

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of Sterno or a backpacking stove (use in outside areas only). Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of these following foods in your Disaster Supplies Kit:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Canned juices, milk, soup (if powdered, store extra water)
- Staples — sugar, salt, pepper
- High energy foods — peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix
- Vitamins
- Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets
- Comfort/stress foods — cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee, tea bags



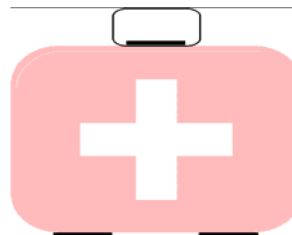
First Aid Kit

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car. A first aid kit should include:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages (3)
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Baby Wipes
- Antiseptic ointment (Neosporin)
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades (2)
- Vaseline or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex-free gloves (2 pair)
- Goggles or safety glasses (1 pair)
- N-95 Mask
- Sunscreen

Non-prescription drugs

- Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- Laxative



Tools and Supplies

- Mess Kits, or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Emergency preparedness manual
- Battery operated radio and extra batteries
- Cash (small bills), change
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- Fire extinguisher, ABC type
- Tube tent
- Pliers
- Tape
- Compass
- Matches in waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare
- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread, scissors
- Medicine dropper
- Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of the local area

Sanitation

- Toilet paper, baby wipes
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Feminine supplies
- Personal hygiene items
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach

Clothing and Bedding

Include at least one 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 needs, such as infants and elderly or 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 eye glasses

Entertainment

- Games and books

Important Family Documents

Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container.

- Will, 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 (include photos)
- Important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

SUGGESTIONS AND REMINDERS

- Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of your Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car.
- Keep items in air tight plastic bags.



- Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh.
- Rotate your stored food every six 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.



For more information on Disaster Preparedness please log on to <http://www.fema.gov> **or** <http://www.redcross.org>