

Disaster Preparedness Guide

Prepare

- Identify hazards
- Create plans
- Practice plans

Execute

- During a disaster
- After the disaster



Identify the Hazards

The first step in creating a disaster plan is to identify what types of disasters could happen to you. Your local fire and police departments, Emergency Management Agency, public health or disaster relief organization are good sources of information in assessing community risks.



Identify the Hazards

- What types of disasters are most likely to happen in your area ?
- What are your best sources of information to alert you to a disaster ?
- What are the community warning signals and what do they mean ?
- What plans are in place at your workplace, school, and daycare ?
- Is there a need for special pre-planning to accommodate an elderly or disabled person ?
- What options are available for animal care after a crisis ?

Some Possible Types of Disasters

- Natural
 - Tornado
 - Flood
 - Blizzard
 - Heat Wave
 - Earthquake
 - Hurricane
 - Mudslide
- Accidental
 - Fire
 - Transportation
 - Chemical Release
- Intentional
 - Bombing
 - Biological
 - Chemical
 - Shooting

Create a Plan

Involving the whole family in developing your plan is essential. Explain the dangers and the necessity for a plan. Use the same agencies in the “Identifying Hazards” section to develop specific responses. Commit your plan to paper and educate each member of the family on how and when it is used.

Create a Plan

- Develop a response to each hazard identified in the “Identify Hazards” section.
- Develop a list of emergency numbers, including someone out-of-town that you can contact following the disaster. Teach children when and how to use these numbers.
- Establish a meeting place immediately outside your home, as well as an out of area destination in case you cannot return home immediately.
- Assemble a disaster supplies kit.
- Conduct a “home hazard hunt”.
- Learn when and how to shut off water, gas and electricity.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home
- Know two ways out of every room.
- Incorporate any special needs of the elderly and disabled.
- Plan how to care for pets after the disaster.

Disaster Supplies Kit

(plan for three days)

- Water (1 gallon per person per day)
- Non-perishable foods
 - Canned meats, fruits, vegetables, soups, juices; peanut butter, crackers, granola bars, trail mix
- First aid kit, include prescription medication.
- Clothing and bedding
 - One change of clothing and footwear per person. Sleeping bags and blankets for every one.
- Sanitation items
 - Personal hygiene items, plastic garbage bags and ties, bucket with lid, disinfectant, bleach.
- Tools
 - Flashlight & radio with extra batteries, hand can opener, ABC type fire extinguisher, wrench , flare, duct tape
- Special items
 - Baby needs, extra eye glasses, cash of travelers checks, books & games.

Practice Plan

Even the best plan is useless unless it has been practiced and maintained. Routinely review, practice and update your plans.



During the Disaster

- The key to surviving a disaster is to calmly, yet quickly execute the specific plan for the disaster your are expecting.
- If disaster strikes:
 - Remain calm and patient
 - Put your disaster plan into action
 - Provide assistance for those who need it
 - Check for injuries
 - Listen to local news for information and instructions

Quick Reference for Potential Hazards

- Fire
 - Only fight small fires not in danger of blocking an exit
 - Use back of hand to check if doors are hot
 - Crawl under smoke
 - If trapped, close door, hang a sheet from the window
 - Meet at your designated spot
 - Never re-enter a burning building
 - Call 911 from a neighbor's house
- Tornado
 - Take immediate shelter if a warning is issued
 - Go to basement or internal hallway
 - Avoid windows, glass or potential flying objects
 - Leave windows closed
 - Hang onto a heavy object with one hand
 - Use the other hand to protect face and neck

Quick Reference

- Flood
 - During a watch. Prepare to evacuate
 - During a warning, evacuate immediately using primary or alternate evacuation route
 - Fill bathtub with water in case of contamination
 - Avoid flood waters and areas prone to flooding
 - Shut off propane tanks at source
- Chemical release/Biological event
 - Listen to news for instructions: FOLLOW THEM
 - Prepare to evacuate and/or use disaster supply kit
 - Stay away from victims until threat is identified
 - Stay upwind, take shallow breaths through a towel
 - Avoid possible contaminated food, water, and area

After the Disaster

- The emotions in a disaster can be devastating. It is crucial to the safety of your family to remain calm, listen for and then follow official instructions.



After the Disaster

- Follow the plan for specific disasters
- Listen to news reports for information and instructions
- Assess condition of house, using a flashlight, not an open flame
- Smell for gas leaks, starting with water heater
- Shut off any damaged utilities
- Clean up any hazardous or flammable spills
- Treat injuries
- Notify local and out of town contacts, then only use phone to report life threatening emergencies
- Document damage for insurance claims

Shelter in Place

In some emergencies, particularly with chemical, biological or terrorist incidents, local officials may advise you to shelter in place. If this is the case, gather your family and supply kit inside. Use a towel or damp cloth to provide some breathing protection. Close all windows and doors and fireplace dampers. Shut off all fans and heating and air conditioning systems. Unless otherwise directed move to an interior room and above ground level and seal any window and door cracks and vents with duct tape. Wait for instructions from authorities.

Practice Plan

- Schedule
 - Monthly
 - Check smoke detectors
 - Every six months
 - Review and practice disaster plans
 - Conduct fire drills
 - Replace batteries in smoke detectors
 - Replace food and water in kit
 - Annually
 - Check if fire extinguisher is fully charged
 - Conduct a home hazard hunt
- Home hazard hunt
 - Maintain working smoke detectors
 - Secure propane gas tanks
 - Keep heavy or breakable items low
 - Keep exit routes clear
 - Avoid excess clutter/trash in and near house
 - Secure mobile home foundation
 - Secure hanging items
 - Safely store poisonous or hazardous items
 - Ensure utility connections are in good shape
 - Check for fire hazards