

**FIRST**  
**WARNING weather**



## HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE?

Is your family ready for a disaster?

See the following steps to make sure you and your family are prepared for any emergency.

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones.
- Install safety features in your house, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Inspect your home for potential hazards (such as items that can move, fall, break, or catch fire) and correct them.
- Have your family learn basic safety measures, such as CPR and first aid; how to use a fire extinguisher; and how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity in your home.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services number.
- 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 case of an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers, such as backpacks or duffle bags.
- Keep important family documents in a waterproof container.
- Keep a smaller disaster supplies kit in the trunk of your car.
- Pick two meeting places right outside of your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
- Outside of your neighborhood in case you can't return home or are asked to leave your neighborhood. Every one must know the address and phone number of the meeting locations.
- Develop an emergency communication plan for getting back together in case you're separated during a disaster.
- Ask an out-of-town relative or friend to be your "family contact" outside of your area.
- Make arrangements for a place to stay with a friend or relative who lives out of town and/or learn about shelter locations.
- Be familiar with escape routes. Depending on the type of disaster, it may be necessary to evacuate your home.
- Plan several escape routes in case certain roads are blocked or closed. Remember to follow the advice of local officials during evacuation situations. They will direct you to the safest route; some roads may be blocked or put you in further danger.
- Teach all responsible family members how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches or valves. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves. Turn off utilities only if you suspect a leak or damaged lines, or if you are instructed to do so by authorities. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on. Paint shut-off valves with white or fluorescent paint to increase visibility. Attach a shut-off valve wrench or other special tool in a conspicuous place close to the gas and water shut-off valves.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home in preparation for a fire or other emergency. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster. Different disasters often require different types of safe places.

- Make two photocopies of vital documents and keep the originals in a safe deposit box. Keep one copy in a safe place in the house, and give the second copy to an out-of-town friend or relative.
- Make a complete inventory of your home, garage, and surrounding property. The inventory can be either written or videotaped. Include information such as serial numbers, make and model numbers, physical descriptions, and price of purchases (receipts, if possible).
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills at least twice a year. Actually drive evacuation routes so each driver will know the way. Select alternate routes in case the main evacuation route is blocked during an actual disaster. Mark your evacuation routes on a map; keep the map in your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Replace stored food and water every six months. Replacing your food and water supplies will help ensure freshness.
- Test your smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries twice a year.
- Plan to take care of your pets. If you must evacuate, it is best to take your pets with you. However, pets (other than service animals) are not permitted in public shelters, according to many local health department regulations and because of other considerations.
- Contact hotels and motels outside of your immediate area to check their policies on accepting pets and restrictions on the number, size, and species. Ask if “no pet” policies could be waived in an emergency.
- Ask friends, relatives, or others outside of the affected area whether they could shelter your animals.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency; include 24-hour phone numbers.
- Keep a list of “pet friendly” places, including their phone numbers, with other disaster information and supplies.
- Carry pets in a sturdy carrier.
- Have identification, collar, leash, and proof of vaccinations for all pets.
- Assemble a portable pet disaster supplies kit. Keep food, water, and any special pet needs in an easy-to-carry container.
- Have a current photo of your pets in case they get lost.

### **TIPS FOR YOUR DISASTER SUPPLY KIT:**

- Keep a smaller Evacuation Kit in the trunk of each car.
- Keep items in airtight plastic bags.
- Replace stored food and water every six months.
- Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.
- Use an easy-to-carry container for the supplies you would most likely need for an evacuation, like a large, covered trash container or a cargo container that will fit on the roof.

### **INSIDE YOUR DISASTER SUPPLY KIT:**

- A portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and first aid manual.
- Blanket, pillows, bedding.
- Supply of prescription medications.
- List of family physicians, important medical information, and the style and serial number of medical devices, such as pacemakers.
- Credit card and cash.
- Whistle.

- Important documents in an airtight container.
- An extra set of car keys.
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Signal flare.
- Map of the area and phone numbers of places you could go.
- First Aid Kit / Medicines / Prescription Drugs.
- Toiletries / Hygiene items / Moisture wipes.
- Flashlight / Batteries.
- One complete change of clothing and footwear for each family member.
- Toys, Books and Games.
- Tools.
- Water purification tablets like Halazone or Globaline.
- Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days.
- Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days.
  - Non-perishable packaged or canned food / juices.
  - Foods for infants or the elderly.
  - Snack foods.
  - Non-electric can opener.
  - Cooking tools / fuel.
  - Kitchen accessories (paper plates / plastic utensils/manual can opener).
- Special items:
  - For baby: formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, medications.
  - For elderly or disabled adults: heart and high blood pressure medication, insulin, prescription drugs, denture needs, contact lenses and supplies, extra eyeglasses, and hearing aid batteries.

### **FIRST AID KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- Assemble a first aid kit for your Disaster Supplies Kit and one for each car.
- First aid manual.
- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes.
- Assorted sizes of safety pins.
- Cleansing agent/soap.
- Latex gloves (2 pairs).
- Sunscreen.
- 2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6).
- 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6).
- Triangular bandages (3).
- Nonprescription drugs.
- 2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls).
- 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls).
- Scissors.
- Tweezers.
- Needle.
- Moistened towelettes.
- Antiseptic.
- Thermometer.
- Tongue depressor blades (2).
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant.

- Have the following nonprescription drugs in your Disaster Supplies Kit:
  - Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever.
  - Antidiarrhea 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).
  - Vitamins.
  - Add any necessary prescription and nonprescription drugs.
  - Add special needs for infants, elderly persons, or anyone with serious allergies.

## **EVACUATION KIT:**

Each family should have a “go bag” – a backpack works best – as a smaller, lighter version of the home disaster kit in case you have to evacuate on foot and can’t haul a big kit in the car. Keep one at home, and a second one in the car or at work in case you can’t go back home before an evacuation. Some families pack individual backpacks for each member that include personal clothing and needs; figure out which works best for your family.

## **YOUR FAMILY “GO BAG” SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- Cell phone charger.
- Cash/credit card.
- Phone list of contacts, hotels, etc.
- Map with evacuation route and meeting place marked.
- Copies of important papers and photo ID in water-proof container or bag.
- First Aid kit.
- Dust mask.
- Nonperishable snacks.
- Bottled water.
- Socks and underwear.
- Whistle.
- Anti-bacterial handcleanser.
- Water purifying tablets.
- Hygiene items.
- Batteries.
- Radio.
- Mess kit.
- Special items like baby formula and eyeglasses.

## **SOURCE:**

NOAA, FEMA