



FAMILY PREPAREDNESS - DEVELOP A DISASTER PLAN

Families should be prepared for all hazards that could affect their area. NOAA's National Weather Service, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Red Cross urge every family to develop a family disaster plan.

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be at work, school, or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe? Severe Weather and other disasters may force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services [water, gas, electricity, or phones] were cut-off?

Don't wait for disaster to decide how to protect your family, follow these steps to develop a plan....

1. Gather information about hazards. Contact your local National Weather Service office, Emergency Management Agency, or American Red Cross chapter to find out what type of disasters could occur and how you should respond. Learn your community's warning signals and evacuation plans.
2. Meet with your family to create a plan. Discuss the information you have gathered. Pick two places to meet: a spot outside your home for an emergency, such as fire, and a place away from your neighborhood in case you cannot return home. Choose an out-of-town or state friend as your "family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family is separated. Discuss what you would do if advised to evacuate.
3. Implement your plan. 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 and correct them. Have your family learn basic safety measures such as CPR and first aid, use of fire extinguishers and how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity in your home. Teach your children how and when to call 911. Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a disaster supplies in sturdy, easy to carry containers, such as backpacks, duffle bags, or plastic totes. Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Keep a smaller disaster supplies kit in the trunk of your car.



A DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- * A three [3] day supply of water [one gallon per person per day] and food that won't spoil
 - * One change of clothing and footwear per person
 - * One blanket or sleeping bag per person
 - * A first aid kit, including prescription medicines
 - * Emergency tools, including a battery-powered NOAA weather radio and a portable radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries
 - * An extra set of car keys and a credit card or cash
 - * Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members
4. Practice and maintain your plan. Ask questions to make sure your family remembers meeting places, phone numbers, and safety rules. Conduct drills. Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries two times each year. Test and recharge your fire extinguishers according to manufacturer's instructions. Replace stored water and food every six months.