

Disaster Preparedness

It's not a matter of "if disaster will strike, but when." Disasters can strike at any time, any where and without warning. Therefore it is important that you have a plan and are prepared. If you know what to do when disaster strikes, you can be more in control of the situation and more able to react calmly. If you are an emergency responder or someone needed to assist during a disaster, being prepared beforehand will give you the peace of mind that your family is ok.

Being prepared and understanding what to do can reduce fear, anxiety and losses that accompany disasters. Communities, families and individuals should know what to do in the event of a disaster and should be ready to evacuate their homes, take refuge in public shelters and know how to care for their basic needs. This checklist will help you get started. It is important to discuss these ideas with you family and then prepare an emergency plan. Post the plan where everyone can see it.



Steps You Can Take To Be Prepared

- Review your **Disaster Supply Kit** and replace water and food every six months.
- Get a **NOAA Weather Radio**.
- Check the batteries in your **smoke alarm** twice a year.
- Review your **insurance policies** to ensure you have adequate coverage.
- Train each family member how and when to **turn off the utilities**-electricity, water and gas.
- Practice **fire and tornado drills**.
- Learn how to "**Shelter-in-Place**."
- Learn how to care for your **pets** during a disaster. Many shelters will not take pets.
- Talk** to your family about disasters.
- Review** what you would do for different types of situations.
- Develop** a Family Communications Plan.
- It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an **out-of-town contact** may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
- Be sure every member of your family **knows the phone number** and has **coins** or a **prepaid phone card** to call the emergency contact.
- You may have trouble getting through, or **the telephone system may be down** altogether, but be patient.
- Plan places** where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- If you have a car, keep a **half tank of gas** in it at all times in case you need to evacuate.
- Become familiar with **alternate routes** and other means of transportation out of your area.
- If you **do not have a car**, plan how you will leave if you have to.

