

## How can I be better prepared for an emergency?

Disasters are never a planned event and always come at the most inconvenient time so why not plan now? Below is a simple checklist you may follow to better prepare yourself to deal with an unforeseen emergency.

**Prepare an Emergency Plan** that will serve as a simple reminder, such as:

- Meet with household members. Discuss with children the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes, and other emergencies.
- Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.
- Learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main switches.
- Post emergency telephone numbers near phones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911, police, and fire.
- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).
- Keep family records in a water and fireproof container.
- Download a copy of an Emergency Planning Sheet.

**Prepare a Supply Kit** to be available in the event you are affected by an emergency that includes:

- A supply of water (one gallon per person per day). Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.  
A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications.
- An extra pair of glasses.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
- Credit cards and cash.
- An extra set of car keys.
- A list of family physicians.
- A list of important family information, e.g. the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members.

## Home Hazard Hunt

In a disaster, ordinary items in the home can cause injury and damage. Anything that can move, fall, break, or cause a fire is a potential hazard.

- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections.
- Fasten shelves securely.
- Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Hang pictures and mirrors away from beds.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Secure water heater. Strap to wall studs.
- Repair cracks in ceilings or foundations.
- Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products away from heat sources.
- Place oily polishing rags or waste in covered metal cans.
- Clean and repair chimneys, flue pipes, vent connectors, and gas vents.

## **If You Need to Evacuate**

- Listen to a battery powered radio for the location of emergency shelters. Follow instructions of local officials.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Lock your house.
- Use travel routes specified by local officials.

## **If you are sure you have time...**

- Shut off water, gas, and electricity, if instructed to do so.
- Let others know when you left and where you are going.
- Make arrangements for pets. Animals may not be allowed in public shelters.

## **Prepare an Emergency Car Kit, include:**

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Blanket
- Booster cables
- Fire extinguisher (5 lb., A-B-C type)
- First aid kit and manual
- Bottled water and non-perishable high-energy foods such as granola bars, raisins, and peanut butter
- Maps
- Shovel
- Tire repair kit and pump
- Flares

## **Fire Safety**

- Plan two escape routes out of each room.
- Teach family members to stay low to the ground when escaping from a fire.
- Teach family members never to open doors that are hot. In a fire, feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand. If it is hot, do not open the door. Find another way out.
- Install smoke detectors. Clean and test smoke detectors once a month. Change batteries at least once a year.
- Keep a whistle in each bedroom to awaken household members in case of fire.
- Check electrical outlets. Do not overload outlets.
- Purchase a fire extinguisher (5 lb., A-B-C type).
- Have a collapsible ladder on each upper floor of your house.
- Consider installing home sprinklers.