

Emergency Preparedness

WHAT TO DO WHEN DISASTER THREATENS



PREPARING A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT

Having a disaster supply kit ready to take with you at a moment's notice ensures that you will have necessary supplies no matter how fast you may need to evacuate. Pack supplies in duffle bags or backpacks and keep them in a designated area. Your kit will also come in handy if you must take shelter in your home. This list will help ensure that your disaster supply kit includes all the essentials.

Water:

- ✓ Pack at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days
- ✓ Store water tightly sealed, non breakable plastic, fiberglass, or enamel-lined metal containers
- ✓ Change water every six months

Food:

- ✓ Pack enough food to last each family member at least three days
- ✓ Include canned and boxed foods because they require little preparation and stay good for long periods of time. *(Remember to bring a manual can opener or buy food in self-opening cans.)*
- ✓ Pack foods in sealed metal or plastic containers
- ✓ Replace food every six months
- ✓ Include food for infants and family members with special dietary needs

Tools and Equipment:

- ✓ Battery-powered radios
- ✓ Flashlights
- ✓ Spare Batteries
- ✓ Ziploc plastic bags
- ✓ Washcloths and towels
- ✓ Paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- ✓ Toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant and other toiletries
- ✓ Heavy-duty plastic garbage bags
- ✓ Change of clothing and extra pair of shoes and socks for each person
- ✓ Blankets or a sleeping bag for each person

Personal Items:

- ✓ Personal Identification
- ✓ Copies of birth and marriage certificates, inventory of household goods, bank account numbers and other important documents
- ✓ Maps
- ✓ Extra car and house keys
- ✓ Prescription medications

IN CASE OF EVACUATION

In a disaster situation, it may be necessary to evacuate your home for several days or longer. Because disasters can strike with little or no warning, you should be prepared to leave at a moment's notice. Knowing beforehand the steps to take in case of evacuation can make a big difference.

- ✓ Contact the local emergency management office to learn evacuation routes for your area
- ✓ Determine where you will go if your community is evacuated
- ✓ Discuss with your family the possibility of evacuation
- ✓ Find out your child's school evacuation policy
- ✓ Check that your disaster supply kit is assembled and ready to go
- ✓ Make sure your car is filled up—fuel may be in short supply during a disaster

WHEN AUTHORITIES TELL YOU TO EVACUATE

- ✓ Bring your disaster supply kit
- ✓ Wear sturdy shoes and clothing
- ✓ Unplug home electronics
- ✓ Lock the doors and windows
- ✓ Turn off the main switches and valves for gas, water and electricity, if instructed
- ✓ Inform a friend or relative of your route
- ✓ Follow recommended evacuation routes. Watch for washed out bridges, flood areas and downed power lines.

PETS

Pets should not be left behind during a disaster but do not risk your own safety attempting to find them if you must evacuate quickly.

- ✓ Attach ID tags to your pet with your name, address and phone number
- ✓ Remember that most emergency shelters do not allow pets (except service animals)
- ✓ Make a list of pet shelters and of hotels that permit animals in the area you would evacuate to
- ✓ Put together an emergency supply kit for your pet. Include food dishes, a litter box, a leash or pet carrier, medication, food, veterinary records and water.

HURRICANES



Hurricanes are tropical cyclones that threaten areas of the United States along the Atlantic coastline and Gulf of Mexico. They can cause extensive damage due to winds, flooding, and even tornados. The hurricane season extends from June to November, and peaks from mid-August to late October.

TERMS TO KNOW

Hurricane Watch: Hurricane conditions are possible within 36 hours.

Hurricane Warning: A hurricane is expected within 24 hours

Storm Surge: A dome of water pushed ashore by hurricane-force winds.

Storm Tide: A storm surge combined with the normal tide.

DURING A HURRICANE THREAT

- ✓ Stay tuned to radio or TV for updates
- ✓ Shutter or board the windows in your home
- ✓ Secure outdoor objects or bring them inside
- ✓ Stock up on food and water in case you must take shelter in your home
- ✓ Fuel up your car in case an evacuation is ordered
- ✓ Turn off utilities at the main valves or switches if instructed by authorities

DURING A HURRICANE

- ✓ Take refuge on the ground floor in a small central room or hallway
- ✓ Get under a table or similar strong object
- ✓ Keep away from windows and glass doors
- ✓ Close all inside doors. Brace all outside doors

HURRICANE EVACUATION

IMPORTANT! EVACUATE BEFORE YOU ARE TOLD TO IF;

- You live in a mobile home
- You live in a high rise
- You live on the coast or near water
- You feel you may be in danger

IF AN EVACUATION IS ORDERED;

- ✓ Leave at once
- ✓ Bring your disaster supply kit
- ✓ Follow advised evacuation routes
- ✓ Keep away from coastal areas or inland water
- ✓ Let others know your plans

AFTER A HURRICANE

- ✓ Remain in a secure location until you are notified it is safe to leave
- ✓ Do not drive unless necessary
- ✓ Do not drink tap water until authorities say it's safe
- ✓ Stay away from waterways until potential flooding has passed
- ✓ Report down power lines and broken gas and sewer mains
- ✓ Inspect your home for damage
- ✓ Report damage to your insurance agent

THUNDERSTORMS



About 10% of the **thunderstorms** that occur in the United States are classified as severe. Even those that are not can still be dangerous. Lightning in particular is a threat though it may seem that a thunderstorm is miles away.

TERMS TO KNOW

Severe Thunderstorm Watch: Severe thunderstorms are likely to occur.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning: Severe thunderstorms have been spotted, and people in the path of the storm are in danger.

BEFORE A THUNDERSTORM STRIKES

- ✓ Cut down dead trees and clear branches from around your house
- ✓ Secure loose outdoor objects such as patio furniture
- ✓ Shutter the windows and secure doors

DURING A THUNDERSTORM

- ✓ Get or stay inside if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder
- ✓ Do not shower or bathe
- ✓ Do not use a corded telephone, except in an emergency. Cell phone and cordless phones are OK to use during a thunderstorm
- ✓ Unplug electronics and turn off air conditioners
- ✓ If outside in a forest, take shelter under a thick growth of small trees
- ✓ If outside in an open area, move to a low spot such as a ravine or valley but beware of flash flooding
- ✓ **Never** stand under a tall, isolated tree, on a hilltop, in an open field, on a beach or near open water
- ✓ Stay away from metal equipment and apparatus such as fences, tractors, pipes and bicycles
- ✓ If swimming or boating, get out of the water immediately and take shelter

IF YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE STRUCK

Feeling your hair stand on end means lightning is about to strike nearby.

- ✓ Make yourself in a small target
- ✓ Squat down on the balls of your feet—do not lie flat on the ground
- ✓ Place your hands over your ears and tuck your head between your knees

FLOODS



Floods occur regularly across the country, causing evacuations, widespread damage and even death. Those living near waterways or other low-lying areas are most at risk, but anyone in a community susceptible to flooding can be affected. Hazards range from potentially deadly flash flooding to water contamination due to broken gasoline or sewer lines.

BEFORE A FLOOD

- ✓ Consider purchasing flood insurance, regular home owners' insurance does not cover flood losses.
- ✓ Know how to get to higher ground from your home.
- ✓ Learn your community's flood evacuation routes.
- ✓ Ask local officials how you can protect your home.

DURING A FLOOD

- ✓ Stay tuned to radio or TV for updates.
- ✓ Watch for flash flooding. This can occur without rain clouds or rain in the immediate area.
- ✓ Avoid low-lying areas such as drainage channels.
- ✓ Never walk through moving water more than 6 inches deep.
- ✓ Do not drive through flooded areas.
- ✓ If your vehicle stalls in water, exit it and move to higher ground.
- ✓ Evacuate if instructed to by authorities and return home only when they say it's safe.

AFTER A FLOOD

- ✓ Be careful in areas where floodwaters have receded.
- ✓ Watch for downed electrical lines and weakened roads and bridges.
- ✓ Stay out of flooded buildings.
- ✓ Use caution when entering damaged structures. Their foundations may have weakened.
- ✓ Avoid coming into contact with floodwater—it may be contaminated. Wash your hands if they get wet.
- ✓ Discard any food that has been in contact with floodwater.

PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY

- ✓ If your home is prone to flooding, move your furnace, water heater and electric panel to higher floors
- ✓ Install “check valves” in sewer traps to prevent water from backing up into your house.
- ✓ Build barriers such as flood wall or levees to keep out flood water.
- ✓ Store insurance policies, deeds and other records in a safe-deposit box.

TORNADOS



Tornados are violent, rotating storms with winds that can exceed 300 miles per hour. The product of thunderstorms and sometime hurricanes, they can be highly destructive. Injuries or deaths from tornados most often are due to collapsed buildings, flying objects, or people caught trying to outrun the funnel cloud.

TERMS TO KNOW

Tornado Watch: Tornadoes are possible in the area

Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted. Take cover at once.

PREPARING FOR A TORNADO

- ✓ Designate a shelter area in your home. Use an interior room or hallway on the ground floor.
- ✓ Practice getting to your home shelter area.
- ✓ If you live in a mobile home, find a sturdy building nearby where you can take shelter. Mobile homes offer little protection in a tornado.
- ✓ Contact local emergency management agency to find out if there are any public safe rooms or shelters nearby.
- ✓ Know the locations of designated shelter areas in places like schools or shopping centers.

DURING A TORNADO WATCH

- ✓ Stay tuned to radio or TV for updates.
- ✓ Be prepared to take shelter at any time since some tornadoes develop so quickly that advance warning is impossible.
- ✓ Watch the sky for funnel-shaped clouds and pay attention to tornado danger signs—dark greenish sky, large hail and a loud roar similar to a freight train.
- ✓ Stay out of large, flat buildings with wide-open areas such as supermarkets or shopping malls.
- ✓ Stock your home shelter area with a flashlight, a battery powered radio, extra batteries, water and a first aid kit.

DURING A TORNADO WARNING

- ✓ Head for the designated shelter or central area on the lowest floor of a nearby building.
- ✓ In a high-rise, get to the lowest floor possible and go to an interior room.
- ✓ Leave vehicles and mobile homes at once. Seek shelter in a sturdy building.
- ✓ If you are caught outside, lie flat in a ditch and cover your head. Do not get under bridges or underpasses.
- ✓ Never attempt to outrun a tornado.

AFTER A TORNADO

- ✓ Watch out for debris—especially broken glass—and downed electrical lines.
- ✓ Be careful when entering a tornado-damaged structure. Make sure the walls and roof are in place and the foundation is sound.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS & WEBSITES

***Oriental Police/Fire** 249-0369 or 675-1859 or 911**

Local Emergency Management 745-4131

Progress Energy - Report power outages 1-800-419-6356

National Response Center - *to report spills* 1-800-424-8802

National Weather Service - www.nws.noaa.gov

US Environmental Protection Agency - www.epa.gov

American Red Cross - www.redcross.org

* Be sure our police department is aware of any special needs you may have (e.g. Using oxygen; bedbound; etc.)