



Preparing Your Family For An Emergency

When preparing for an emergency, plan on having enough supplies to get you and your family through the first 72 hours. When a major emergency occurs, there's a good chance that emergency response teams may not be able to reach you for several days. We must all be prepared in the event of an emergency.

-Richard C. Fuller III, Sheriff

Preparation for an Emergency Checklist

Be Smart, Be Prepared, Be Responsible

- Stock up on a three-day supply of food, water, clothes, blankets, medical supplies and other necessary equipment for everyone in the family. Make sure everyone knows where to find them.
- Decide where and when to reunite your family should you be apart when a disaster strikes.
- Purchase and install a gasoline powered generator system for electrical power. Use only as needed to preserve your gasoline supply.
- Purchase wind-up flashlights and radios that do not require batteries.
- Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend. Make plans for someone to pick them up if you are unable to do so.
- Practice Stop, Drop and Roll regularly. (especially children age 14 and younger)
- Take photographs or video of family members and place them in a safe spot. Make copies and keep them with a friend or relative in another city or state.
- If possible, keep extra cash on hand. You may not be able to make it to an ATM or Bank.
- Include your babysitter and other household help in your plans.
- Know the location of shutoff valves for gas, water and electricity before an emergency occurs. Learn how to shut them off if necessary.
- Make copies of vital records and keep them in a safe place in another city or state. Make sure your originals are stored safely. If possible, fingerprint all family members, especially children.
- Before a major emergency occurs, call your local Red Cross Chapter and Office of Emergency Management to find out the locations of emergency shelters and emergency medical care centers.
- Establish a safe word for young children. This would be used only in the event of separation so children know the person contacting-finding them is "safe".
- Designate a person outside the immediate area to contact if separated. Long distance phone service is commonly restored before local service. Do not use your phone immediately after the emergency.
- Establish an evacuation plan should you need to abandon your home. Keep exit routes clear and designate a specific meeting place a safe distance away. Wait for all members to arrive.
- Know the safest place in each room. Explain that interior rooms away from windows are ideal. In the event of a tornado, practice moving under a sturdy table for protection.
- Know the location of the nearest Police and Fire stations.
- Keep extra pairs of glasses and house and car keys on hand.

General Tips

Stay away from heavy standing furniture, appliances, large glass panes, shelves holding heavy objects and large masonry items such as a fireplace. Keep your hallway clear. It is usually one of the safest places to be during a tornado or explosion. Stay away from kitchens, garages and barns, which tend to be the most dangerous place because of the many items kept there.