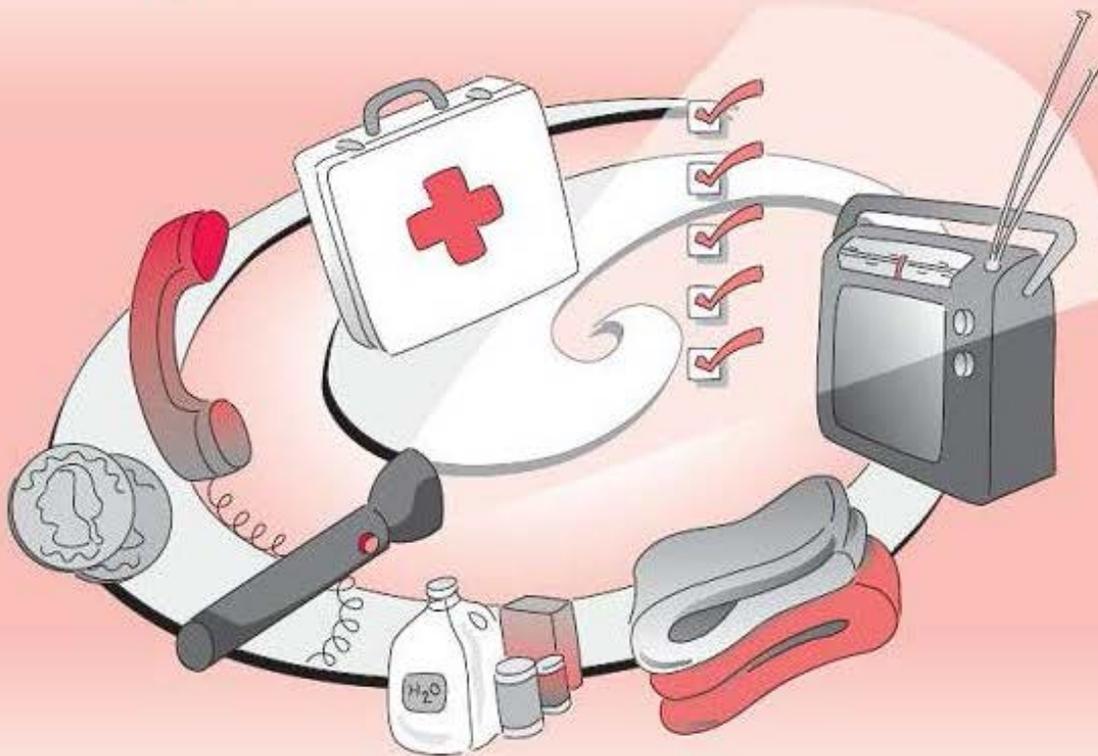


# *Family* **Emergency** **Preparedness** *Plan*



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FAMILY NAME

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DATE PREPARED

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NEXT REVIEW DATE

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# Why Plan?

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This Family Emergency Preparedness Plan is designed to help UW-Stevens Point employees and their families develop an emergency family plan.

Central Wisconsin is subject to a number of potential natural disasters such as fires, flooding, severe storms, dam failures, and tornadoes. While we all hope that such occurrences never happen, it has been shown time and time again that **being prepared for disasters is essential to survival.**

## **The first 72 hours are on you!**

Emergency services and government agencies may not be able to respond to your needs immediately. Buildings, equipment, personnel, communications, and mobility may be severely hampered by the event and systems will be overwhelmed. *It is up to individuals to plan to be without services or help for a minimum of three days (72 hours).*

We cannot stop these disasters from occurring, but we can limit their impact on us and those we love. Contrary to what you may think, the chances of being killed or injured in a disaster are very low. More likely you will be unable to live normally in your home. It may be damaged and let in the weather, it may be cold with no heat, you may have no power or water, or it may not even be safe for you to go back into. In short, disasters make life very uncomfortable. Proper planning and preparation will help you and your family be more comfortable in the event that your home is damaged, or you can't get back into it. Think of it as a "quality of life" issue. The most important concept in developing a **family emergency preparedness plan** is communication. Every member of the family needs to be involved so that when disaster strikes, everyone will know what to do. How well you manage the aftermath of disaster depends a great deal on your level of preparedness when disaster strikes.

In the following pages you will find a step-by-step guide to disaster planning along with other essential information you will need in building a comprehensive family emergency preparedness plan. Be sure to involve all the members of your household when developing your preparedness plan. A plan will only work when everyone knows about it and agrees to operate within its guidelines.

Once your family is prepared, it is time to look to your neighbors. In times of disaster your neighbors will probably be the first ones available to come to your aid. Find out before disaster strikes what resources you share and how you can work together for the good of one another. Good luck! And don't forget to review your plan annually.

**Prepare...** *Because you care*

# FOUR STEPS TO DISASTER PLANNING

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## 1 Find Out What Disasters Could Happen To You

- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen in your area.

Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them. Also, learn which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.

Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.

Find out about the disaster plan at your (and your spouse's) workplace, your children's school or childcare center and other places your family frequents.

## 2 Create A Disaster Plan

*Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster.  
Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.*

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.

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- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan to take care of your pets.

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- Ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your "family contact." often easier to call long distance following a disaster.

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- Pick two places to meet:
  1. Right outside your home in case of fire.
  2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return. Everyone must know the address and phone number.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3 Put Your Plan Into Action

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local emergency medical services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC type fire extinguisher in your home, teach family members to use it, and show them where it is kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble supplies
- Take a first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two for each room.
- Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.

### 4 Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Review your plans every six months so everyone remembers what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly. Change the batteries every six months and clean the dust from the detector each time you change batteries.  
*Date of last battery change:* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Next battery change due:* \_\_\_\_\_
- Replace stored water and food every six months.  
*Date of last rotation:* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Date of next rotation:* \_\_\_\_\_

# Prepare Your Household for Emergencies

*After a disaster, you and your family should be prepared to be on your own for at least three days. In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more. Emergency response teams will be very busy and may not be able to provide immediate care to all who need it.*



## Before disaster strikes

- Choose a place for your family to meet after a disaster.
- Choose a person outside the immediate area for family members to contact in case you get separated. This person should live far enough away so he or she won't be involved in the same emergency.
- Know how to contact your children at their school or daycare, and how to pick them up after a disaster. Let the school know if someone else is authorized to pick them up. Keep your child's emergency release card up to date.
- Put together an emergency supply kit for your home and workplace. If your child's school or daycare stores personal emergency kits, make one for your child to keep there.
- Know where the nearest fire and police stations are located.
- Learn your community's warning signals, what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Learn first aid and CPR. Have a first aid kit, a first aid manual and extra medicine for family members.
- Learn how to shut off your water, gas and electricity. Know where to find shut-off valves and switches.

- Keep a small amount of cash available. If the power is out, ATM machines won't work.
- If you have family members who don't speak English, prepare emergency cards in English with their names, addresses and information about medications or allergies.
- Make sure they can find their cards at all times.
- Conduct fire drills every six months.
- Make copies of your vital records and store them in a safe deposit box in another city or state. Store the originals safely. Keep photos and videotapes of your home and valuables in your safe deposit box.
- Make sure family members know all the possible ways to get out of your home. Keep all exits clear.
- Make sure all family members agree on an emergency plan. Give emergency information to babysitters or other caregivers.

## During an emergency or disaster

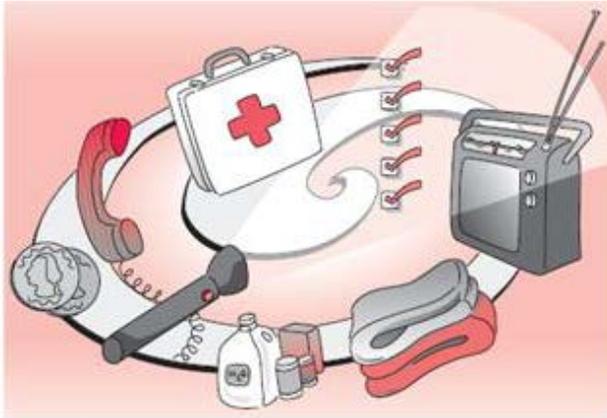
- Keep calm and take time to think. Give assistance where needed.
- Listen to your radio or television for official information and instructions.
- Use the telephone for emergency calls only.
- If you are ordered to evacuate, take your emergency kit and follow official directions to a safe place or temporary shelter.

## After the emergency or disaster is over

- Use caution in entering damaged buildings and homes.
- Stay away from damaged electrical wires and wet appliances.
- Check food and water supplies for contamination.

# Emergency Supplies

Government agencies will respond to community disasters, but citizens may be on their own for hours, even days, after disaster strikes. You should be prepared to take care of yourself and your family for at least three days (72 hours). In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more.



## Emergency survival kit

- Store one of these at home, at work and at each child's school or daycare facility.
- Dry or canned food and drinking water for each person
- Can opener
- First aid supplies and first aid book
- Copies of important documents, such as birth certificates, licenses and insurance policies
- "Special needs" items for family members, such as infant formula, eye glasses and medications
- A change of clothing
- Sleeping bag or blanket
- Battery powered radio or television
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Whistle
- Waterproof matches
- Toys, books, puzzles, games
- Extra house keys and car keys
- List of contact names and phone numbers
- Food, water and supplies for pets

## Additional items you can store at home for use during an emergency:

### Cooking supplies

- Barbecue, camp stove
- Fuel for cooking, such as charcoal or camp stove fuel
- Plastic knives, forks, spoons
- Paper plates and cups
- Paper towels
- Heavy-duty aluminum foil

### Sanitation supplies

- Large plastic trash bags for trash, water protection
- Large trash cans
- Bar soap and liquid detergent
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Feminine and infant supplies
- Toilet paper
- Household bleach with no additives, and eyedropper (for purifying drinking water)
- Newspaper — to wrap garbage and waste

### Comfort

- Sturdy shoes
- Gloves for clearing debris
- Tent

### Tools

- Ax, shovel, broom
- Crescent wrench for turning off gas
- Screwdriver, pliers, hammer
- Coil of one-half inch rope
- Plastic tape and sheeting
- Knife or razor blades
- Garden hose for siphoning and fire fighting

***The first 72 is on you!***

# Helping Children after a Disaster

*It's important to remember some children may never show distress, while others may not give evidence of being upset for several weeks or even months after an emergency. Other children may not show a change in behavior, but may still need your help.*

*Children who experience an initial traumatic event before they are 11 years old are three times more likely to develop psychological symptoms than those who experience their first trauma later. Children are able to cope better with a traumatic event if parents and other adults support and help them with their experiences. Help should start as soon as possible after the event.*



## **Children may exhibit the following behaviors after a disaster:**

- Be upset over the loss of a favorite toy or possession that is important to them.
- Change from being quiet, obedient and caring to loud, noisy and aggressive, or change from being outgoing to shy and afraid.
- Develop night-time fears (nightmares, fear of the dark or sleeping alone).
- Be afraid the event will reoccur.
- Become easily upset.
- Lose trust in adults. (After all, their adults were not able to control the disaster.)
- Revert to younger behavior (bed-wetting, thumb-sucking).
- Want to stay close to parents. Refuse to go to school or day care.
- Feel they caused the disaster because of something they said or did.
- Become afraid of wind, rain or sudden loud noises.
- Have symptoms of illness, such as headaches, vomiting or fever.
- Worry about where they and their family will live.

## **Things parents can do to help their children:**

- Talk with children about how they are feeling. Assure them that it's okay to have those feelings.
- Help children learn to use words that express their feelings, such as "happy," "sad," or "angry."
- Children should not be expected to be brave or tough. Tell them it is okay to cry.

- Don't give children more information than they can handle about the disaster.
- Assure fearful children you will be there to care for them; consistently reassure them.
- Go back to former routines as soon as possible. Maintain a regular schedule for the children.
- Reassure children that the disaster was not their fault.
- Let children have some control, such as choosing clothing or what meal to have for dinner.
- Re-establish contact with extended family.
- Help your children learn to trust adults again by keeping promises you make.
- Help your children regain faith in the future by making plans.
- Get needed health care as soon as possible.
- Spend extra time with your children at bedtime.
- Make sure children eat healthy meals and get enough rest.
- Allow special privileges for a short period of time, such as leaving the light on when they go to bed.
- Find ways to emphasize to your children that you love them.
- Allow children time to grieve losses.
- Develop positive anniversary activities to commemorate the event. These may bring tears, but they are also a time to celebrate survival and the ability to get back to a normal life.

# Take Care of Your Psychological and Emotional Needs

*It is natural to be upset when you think your health or the health of your loved ones is threatened. Pay attention to your own feelings and take care of your emotional needs, then you can better help friends and family members handle their concerns.*



## **Coping with uncertainty**

- Anxiety can be related to fear of the unknown. It is normal to feel anxious and worried during an emergency.

## **Everyone reacts differently to an emergency**

- People often experience changes in their physical, emotional or mental state during and after emergencies. For example, they may have trouble sleeping, experience anger or depression, or have problems at work or school. These are among the many normal reactions to an emergency situation. There are things you can do to cope with these problems. However, if these reactions seem extreme or last for a long time, the person suffering the condition should seek help.

## **Get reliable information**

- When an emergency happens, it is important to keep things in perspective. Get information about the event from:
  - Newspaper, radio, television
  - Your health care provider
  - Your local health department

## **Here are some ways you can cope with stress and anxiety:**

- Limit your exposure to graphic news stories
- Get accurate, timely information from reliable sources
- Learn more about the specific health hazard
- Maintain your normal routine, if possible
- Avoid drugs and excessive drinking
- Exercise, eat well and get enough sleep
- Stay active physically and mentally
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- If you can, help others
- Keep a sense of humor
- Share your concerns with others

## **Stay connected**

- The fear associated with a public health emergency can push people apart. People who are normally close to family and friends may avoid contact because they are afraid they might get sick. It is important to stay connected with others. Use the phone and email.
- Ask for help if you need it. If your anxiety about a health risk gets in the way of your daily life, talk to someone you trust. This may be your doctor, a family member, friend, clergy member, teacher or mental health professional.
- If you notice a big change in a loved one, friend or co-worker, reach out to them. Make some time to talk. Watching out for others shows you care and it can be comforting for both of you.
- If you or someone you know is having a hard time managing their emotions, seek help from a medical or mental health professional.

# Getting Medicine During a Public Health Emergency

*The Strategic National Stockpile is a federal government program that provides medication and medical supplies to states during an emergency.*

## When help is needed fast

- If a disease outbreak, bioterrorism attack or natural disaster happens in Central Wisconsin, hundreds, possibly thousands, of people will need medical attention to treat or prevent the spread of disease. Local medical supplies and medications will be used up quickly during such a public health emergency.
- The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) helps meet the need for additional supplies by quickly delivering large quantities of critical emergency medicines and supplies to states that request them.

## Assistance for your community

- In the event of a disaster, outbreak or attack, the Governor/Mayor(s) will ask the federal government to send SNS shipments to your community. Once help is approved, the SNS will fill the request from storage facilities strategically located around the country. Supplies can be delivered to any state within 12 hours of the request.
- Depending on the type of emergency, the SNS will deliver antibiotics, chemical antidotes, antitoxins or other medical or surgical items. Additional drugs and/or medical supplies can be supplied within the following 24 to 36 hours.
- When SNS shipments are received, state emergency response workers will immediately deliver the supplies and medications directly to the communities that need them.

## Finding medication during an emergency

- Cities and towns will set up emergency medication centers (also known as points of dispensing sites or PODS) where people can pick up the emergency medications or receive vaccinations. Medication centers will be located in large public buildings such as schools, arenas or churches in several geographic areas to minimize the amount of time people need to travel to reach them.

- Local public health agencies will announce when medication centers will open, where to find them, how to get there, what to bring and what to expect. You will be able to get this important information from sources that include:
- Television and radio news; newspapers
- State and local public health and emergency management Web sites
- Community, civic and religious organizations.
- Local governments are responsible for determining the location of medication centers in their areas. In many cases these sites will not be made public until an emergency occurs. Not all medication center sites will be used for every emergency, so it will be important to check the resources listed above for current information in the event of an emergency.

## At the medication center

- If medication centers are opened to distribute medicine from the Strategic National Stockpile in an emergency, there will be no charge to the public.
- Trained staff will be available to assist you at the medication center.
- The process will be simple.
- Depending on the type of emergency, one person may be able to pick up medications for a household or group.

## Personal Medication Wallet Card

Create your own personalized medication wallet card that documents your important medical information.

Visit [www.rxresponse.org/resources/rx-on-the-run](http://www.rxresponse.org/resources/rx-on-the-run).



# Protect Your Pets

*Consider your pets when planning for emergencies. Know where to take your pets in an emergency and remember their needs when creating your family preparedness kit.*



## **Before the disaster**

- Find a safe place for your pets to stay. Some hotels and motels may allow you to bring pets; others may suspend their “no pet” rules during an emergency. Check ahead to make sure you can bring your pet.
- Make sure your pets wear current ID tags all the time, and that carriers for each pet are labeled with contact information. Talk with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as microchipping, and enrolling your pet in a recovery database.
- Make sure your pets are current on their vaccinations. Pet shelters may require proof of vaccines.

## **During a disaster**

- Keep pets in the house as emergency situations develop so you can locate them.
- Don't wait until the last minute to get ready. Warnings may be issued hours or days in advance.

## **If you evacuate, take your pets**

- If it's not safe for you to stay in the disaster area, it's not safe for your pets. Don't leave animals inside your home, chained outside or roaming loose. They can easily be injured, lost or killed.
- If you leave, take your pet even if you think you'll be able to come home in just a few hours.

## **If you don't evacuate**

- Keep your pets with you in a safe area of your home. Keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers, and make sure they are wearing identification.

- In case you're not home during a disaster, arrange well in advance for a trusted neighbor to take your pets. Be sure the person is comfortable with your pets, knows where to find them and your pet emergency supplies, and has a key to your home.

## **After the disaster**

- For a few days, keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers inside the house. If your house is damaged, they could escape and become lost.
- Be patient with your pets. Re-establish their routines as soon as possible. Be ready for behavioral problems.

## **Emergency supply list for pets**

Have everything ready to go. Store supplies in sturdy easy-to-carry containers. Include:

- Medications, medical records, and first-aid kit – stored in a waterproof container.
- Sturdy leashes and harnesses.
- A secure carrier large enough for your pet to comfortably stand, turn around, and lie down. Add blankets or towels for bedding.
- Photos of you with your pets to help identify lost pets and prove ownership.
- Food and water for at least seven days for each pet. Bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian.
- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them.
- Newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items and household bleach.

# Pandemic Flu

## **An influenza pandemic is a worldwide outbreak of a new flu virus**

- An influenza — or flu — pandemic is an outbreak of a new type of flu virus that spreads rapidly from one country to another. Because the virus is new, people don't have a natural immunity to it and vaccine will not be available for many months. Without vaccine or immunity, the virus passes rapidly from person to person. Hundreds of thousands in our country could get sick, and many could die.
- There have been three large flu pandemics in the 20th century – 1918, 1957, and 1968. No one knows where or when the next one will begin, but health officials agree that it is only a matter of time.

## **What to expect if an outbreak occurs**

- A flu pandemic could be devastating, so everyone should be prepared for the worst. With up to one-third of the workforce sick or staying home, supplies and services could be limited or disrupted.
- Extraordinary measures could be required. You may be asked to stay away from other people, large public events like concerts or sports could be canceled, and schools could be closed. Health officials may issue orders to keep people with the virus at home or in special facilities. You may be asked to wear a mask in medical facilities or other public places.
- A flu pandemic could last a long time. The 1918 flu pandemic lasted 18 months.

## **What to do now**

- Be ready to help family and neighbors who are elderly or have special needs if services they depend on are not available.
- Know school policies about illness and absence. Make a plan for taking care of your children if schools are closed for long periods.
- Be prepared to stay home from work when you are sick. Know work policies about sick leave, absences, time off and telecommuting.

- Explore ways to get your work done with less personal contact, such as increased use of e-mail and phone conferences.
- Be prepared to get by for a week or more on what you have at home. Stores may not be open or may have limited supplies.
- Plan to limit the number of trips you take to shop or to run errands.

## **Prevent the spread of germs**

- The flu virus is spread from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches things that others use. To protect yourself and others:
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Cough into your sleeve or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.
- Wash your hands. Soap and warm water are best, but alcohol-based hand gel or disposable wipes also work.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth. The flu virus is often spread when a person touches something that has the flu virus on it and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay home when you're sick or have flu symptoms. Drink extra water, get plenty of rest, and check with a health care provider as needed.

## **Learn home-care basics**

- Know how to care for someone with fever, body aches, and lung congestion. During a pandemic, follow health official's instructions.
- Learn about dehydration. The flu virus causes the body to lose water through fever and sweating. Watch for weakness, fainting, dry mouth, dark concentrated urine, low blood pressure, or a fast pulse when lying or sitting down. These are signs of dehydration. To prevent dehydration, it is very important for a person with the flu to drink a lot of water — up to 12 glasses a day.

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

### ***1. To plan for a pandemic:***

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- Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

### ***2. To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:***

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- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the current behavior.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.
- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

### 3. Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples of food and non-perishables	Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Protein or fruit bars</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal or granola</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or nuts</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dried Fruit</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Crackers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Canned juices</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Canned or jarred baby food and formula</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pet food</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other nonperishable foods</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Anti-diarrheal medication</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fluids with electrolytes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cleansing agent/soap</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Batteries</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Portable radio</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers</li></ul>

# Shelter-in-Place

*If a chemical agent attack happens, authorities will instruct people to either seek shelter where they are and seal the premises (shelter-in-place), or evacuate immediately. If ordered to remain in your home, office or school, follow these directions to “shelter-in-place.”*



Go inside.



Close all windows and doors.



Turn off ventilation systems (heating and air-conditioning, and fireplace dampers).



Go into a room with the fewest doors and windows and seal the room.



Stay in the room until told by the authorities that it is safe to come out.

## How to shelter-in-place

- Dampen towels and place over the cracks under doors.
- Duct tape around the door.
- Turn on the radio.
- Don't air out or leave your sealed shelter until you are told to do so.

## Remember

- If ordered to evacuate, do so immediately and carefully follow directions. Do not wander about; know where you are going and how to get there.
- Avoiding chemical exposure should be your primary goal. Leaving your sheltered area to rescue or assist victims can be a deadly decision.

- In a chemical emergency, there is very little an untrained volunteer can do to help victims. Stay in your sheltered area until authorities determine it is safe to come out.
- If you were outside before taking shelter and think you may have been exposed to a chemical agent, there are several things you can do. If you are in a sealed shelter, take off at least your outer clothes, put them in a plastic bag and seal the bag. If water is available, wash or take a cool to warm (not hot) shower, using lots of soap and water. Do not put the soap in your eyes, just lots of water. If you leave the area, tell emergency responders or medical staff at your destination you may have been exposed. Tell the emergency responders about the sealed bag so that they can arrange for its safe removal after the emergency.

# Disaster Tips for People with Special Medical Needs

*In a disaster, people with special medical needs have extra concerns. This information will help you and your family prepare for an emergency.*

## Medications

- Always have at least a three-day supply of all your medications. In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more.
- Store your medications in one location in their original containers.
- Have a list of all of your medications: name of medication, dose, frequency, and the name of the prescribing doctor.

## Medical supplies

- Have an extra three-day supply of any medical supplies you use, such as bandages, ostomy bags or syringes.

## Electrically powered medical equipment

- For all medical equipment requiring electrical power — beds, breathing equipment, or infusion pumps — check with your medical supply company and get information regarding a back-up power source such as a battery or generator.

## Oxygen and breathing equipment

- If you use oxygen, have an emergency supply (enough for at least a three-day period).
- Oxygen tanks should be securely braced so they do not fall over. Call your medical supply company regarding bracing instructions.
- If you use breathing equipment, have a three-day supply or more of tubing, solutions and medications.

## Intravenous (IV) and feeding tube equipment

- Know if your infusion pump has battery back-up, and how long it would last in an emergency.
- Ask your home care provider about manual infusion techniques in case of a power outage.
- Have written operating instructions attached to all equipment.

## Emergency bag

In the event that you have to leave your home, have a bag packed at all times that contains:

- A medication list.
- Medical supplies for at least three days.
- Copies of vital medical papers such as insurance cards and power of attorney.

## People who can help

- An important part of being prepared for a disaster is planning with family, friends and neighbors. Know who could walk to your home to assist you if no other means of transportation is available.
- Discuss your disaster plans with your home health care provider.
- Ask your local fire department if they keep a list of people with special medical needs; ask to be included if they do maintain a list.
- Keep a phone contact list handy of people who can help.



# Disaster Tips for People with Visual Disabilities

## Canes

- If you use a cane, keep extras in strategic, consistent, and secured locations at work, home, school and volunteer site to help you maneuver around obstacles and hazards.
- Keep a spare cane in your emergency kit.

## Alternative mobility cues

- If you have some vision, place security lights in each room to light paths of travel. These lights plug into electric wall outlets and light up automatically if there is a loss of power. They will, depending on type, continue to operate automatically for 1 to 6 hours and can be turned off manually and used as a short-lasting flashlight.
- Store high-powered flashlights with wide beams and extra batteries.
- Plan for losing the auditory clues you usually rely on after a major disaster.
- Service animals may become confused, frightened or disoriented during and after a disaster. Keep them confined or securely leashed or harnessed. A leash/harness is an important item for managing a nervous or upset animal. Be prepared to use alternative ways to negotiate your environment.

## Label supplies

- If helpful, mark emergency supplies with large print, fluorescent tape or Braille.



## Secure computers

- Anchor special equipment and large pieces of furniture such as computers and shelving. Create a computer back-up system for important data and store it off site.

## Advocacy issues

- Advocate that TV news not only post important phone numbers, but also announce them slowly and repeat them frequently for people who cannot read the screen.

# Disaster Tips for the Hearing Impaired



## Hearing aids

- Store hearing aid(s) in a strategic, consistent and secured location so they can be found and used after a disaster.
- For example, consider storing them in a container by your bedside, which is attached to a nightstand or bedpost using a string or Velcro. Missing or damaged hearing aids will be difficult to replace or fix immediately after a major disaster.

## Batteries

- Store extra batteries for hearing aids and implants. If available, store an extra hearing aid with your emergency supplies.
- Maintain TTY batteries. Consult your manual for information.
- Store extra batteries for your TTY and light phone signaler. Check the owner's manual for proper battery maintenance.

## Communication

- Determine how you will communicate with emergency personnel if there is no interpreter or if you don't have your hearing aids. Store paper and pens for this purpose.
- Consider carrying a pre-printed copy of important messages with you, such as: "I speak American Sign Language (ASL) and need an ASL interpreter," "I do not write or read English," and "If you make announcements, I will need to have them written or signed."
- If possible, obtain a battery-operated television that has a decoder chip for access to signed or captioned emergency reports.
- Determine which broadcasting systems will be accessible in terms of continuous news that will be captioned and/or signed. Advocate so that television stations have a plan to secure emergency interpreters for on-camera duty.

## Alarms

- Install both audible alarms and visual smoke alarms. At least one should be battery operated.
- **Advocacy**
- Recruit interpreters to be American Red Cross emergency volunteers.
- Encourage TV stations to broadcast all news and emergency information in open caption format.
- When you travel, ensure hotels have services for deaf and hearing-impaired persons, including visual alarms. Ask for them when you check in.

# Disaster Tips for People with Mobility Disabilities



## Storage

- Store emergency supplies in a pack or backpack attached to a walker, wheelchair or scooter.
- Store needed mobility aids (canes, crutches, walkers, wheelchairs) close to you in a consistent, convenient and secured location. Keep extra aids in several locations, if possible.

## Emergency supply kit

- Keep a pair of heavy gloves in your supply kit to use while wheeling or making your way over glass or debris.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair or scooter, consider having an extra battery available. A car battery can be substituted for a wheelchair battery, but this type of battery will not last as long as a wheelchair's deep-cycle battery. Check with your vendor to see if you will be able to charge batteries by either connecting jumper cables to a vehicle battery or by connecting batteries to a specific type of converter that plugs into your vehicle's cigarette lighter in the event of loss of electricity.

- If your chair does not have puncture-proof tires, keep a patch kit or can of "seal-in" air product to repair flat tires, or keep an extra supply of inner tubes.
- Store a lightweight manual wheelchair, if available.
- Make sure furniture is secured so that it doesn't block the pathways you normally travel.
- If you spend time above the first floor of a building with an elevator, plan and practice using alternative methods of evacuation. If needed, enlist the help of your personal support network.
- If you cannot use stairs, discuss lifting and carrying techniques that will work for you. There will be times when wheelchair users will have to leave their chairs behind in order to safely evacuate a structure.
- Sometimes transporting someone down stairs is not a practical solution unless there are at least two or more strong people to control the chair. It is very important to discuss the safest way to transport you if you need to be carried, and alert helpers to any areas of vulnerability. For example, the traditional "firefighter's carry" may be hazardous for some people with respiratory weakness.
- Be prepared to give helpers brief instructions on the best way to move you.

# Prevent the Spread of Germs

*Here are some simple tips to help keep respiratory infections and many other contagious diseases from spreading, especially during the cough, cold and “flu” season.*

Respiratory infections affect the nose, throat and lungs; they include influenza (the “flu”), colds and pertussis (whooping cough). The germs (viruses and bacteria) that cause these infections are spread from person to person in droplets from the nose, throat and lungs of someone who is sick.

You can help stop the spread of these germs by practicing “respiratory etiquette,” or good health manners.

Here are some tips to help prevent spreading your germs to others, and to avoid catching someone else’s germs.



## **Keep your germs to yourself**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Discard used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose, or coughing, or after touching used tissues or handkerchiefs. Wash hands often if you are sick.
- Use warm water and soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizers to wash your hands.
- Try to stay home if you have a cough and fever.
- See your doctor as soon as you can if you have a cough and fever, and follow their instructions. Take medicine as prescribed and get lots of rest.

- If asked, use face masks provided in your doctor’s office or clinic’s waiting room. Follow office and clinic staff’s instructions to help stop the spread of germs.

## **Keep the germs away**

- Wash your hands before eating, or touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Wash your hands after touching anyone who is sneezing, coughing or blowing their nose.
- Don’t share things like towels, lipstick, toys, or anything else that might be contaminated with respiratory germs.
- Don’t share food, utensils or beverage containers with others.

# Accidental Poisoning

*Poisons can be found in everyday items located in all areas of your home – kitchen, closets, bathrooms, attic, garage, dining room, laundry room, storage areas and basements. To help prevent accidental poisoning, follow these poison prevention tips.*

**Within the United States, if you have a poison emergency or a question about poisons, call 1-800-222-1222**

## Poison prevention tips

- Use child-resistant containers (but remember: child-resistant containers are not completely childproof).
- Keep potentially poisonous products in their original containers (see below for product list).
- Place potentially poisonous products out of reach immediately after use.
- Put **Mr. Yuk** stickers on all poisonous products in and around your home, and teach children what the stickers mean.
- For more information on **Mr. Yuk** — visit: [http://www.chp.edu/mryuk/05a\\_mryuk.php](http://www.chp.edu/mryuk/05a_mryuk.php)



- For a free sheet of Mr. Yuk stickers, send a self-addressed, stamped business-size (#10) envelope to:  
Free Mr. Yuk Stickers  
Pittsburgh Poison Center  
3705 Fifth Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
- Keep emergency numbers, including the Poison Center toll-free number, next to your phone.

## Make sure these products are stored safely

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications (including aspirin and vitamins).
- Disinfectants, deodorants and air fresheners.



- All kinds of sprays.
- Polishes and cleansing powder.
- Fertilizers and weed killers.
- Insect and rodent poison; slug bait.
- Paint remover and turpentine.
- Cosmetics.
- Soaps, detergents and shampoo.
- Toilet bowl and drain cleaners.
- Lye and bleach.
- Kerosene and lighter fluids.
- Insect repellent.
- Mothballs and pesticides.

Note: Special care should also be taken with house plants as many may be poisonous if eaten by humans or pets.

## What to do when someone is poisoned

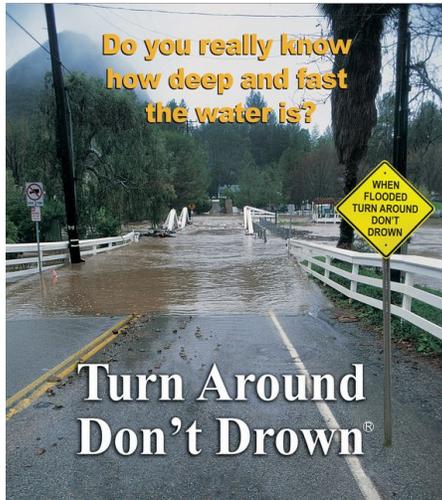
- If it is a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1. If you suspect a possible poisoning — or for more information on potential poisons — call 1-800-222-1222.

## Be prepared to answer the following questions

- What was taken? (Exact name of the product.) Bring product container to the phone if possible.
- When was it taken?
- How much was taken?
- Who took it? Body size makes a big difference in determining a poisonous dose.
- The name, condition, age and weight of the patient.
- Address and telephone number from where you are calling.

# Floods

*Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. If you live in an area where floods occur, you should know the following:*



## What to do before a flood

- Plan for evacuation including where you are going to go and the route you will follow.
- Purchase flood insurance.
- Keep all insurance policies and a list of valuable items in a safe place.
- Take photos or a videotape of the valuables you keep in your home.
- Listen to your radio or television for reports of flood danger.
- Keep your car filled with gas.

## What to do during a flood

- **Do not** try to walk or drive through flooded areas. Water can be deeper than it appears and water levels rise quickly. Follow official emergency evacuation routes. If your car stalls in floodwater, get out quickly and move to higher ground.
- Stay away from moving water; moving water six inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Cars are easily swept away in just two feet of water.
- Stay away from disaster areas unless authorities ask for volunteers.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

- If your home is flooded, turn the utilities off until emergency officials tell you it is safe to turn them on. Do not pump the basement out until floodwater recedes. Avoid weakened floors, walls and rooftops.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and clean water if you come in contact with floodwaters.

## What to do after a flood

- Wear gloves and boots when cleaning up.
- Open all doors and windows. Use fans if possible to air out the building. Wash all clothes and linens in hot water.
- Discard mattresses and stuffed furniture; they can't be adequately cleaned.
- Wash dirt and mud from walls, counters and hard surfaced floors with soap and water. Disinfect by wiping surfaces with a solution of one cup bleach per gallon of water.
- Discard all food that has come into contact with floodwater. Canned food is alright, but thoroughly wash the can before opening.
- If your well is flooded, your tap water is probably unsafe. If you have public water, the health department will let you know — through radio and television — if your water is not safe to drink. Until your water is safe, use clean bottled water.
- Learn how to purify water. If you have a well, learn how to decontaminate it.
- Do not use your septic system when water is standing on the ground around it. The ground below will not absorb water from sinks or toilets. When the soil has dried, it is probably safe to again use your septic system. To be sure, contact your local health department.
- When floodwaters have receded, watch out for weakened road surfaces.

# Hot Weather Precautions

*Severe heat may cause illness or even death. When temperatures rise to extreme highs, reduce risks by taking the following precautions:*



## **Hot weather precautions to reduce the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke**

- Stay indoors and in an air-conditioned environment as much as possible unless you're sure your body has a high tolerance for heat.
- Drink plenty of fluids but avoid beverages that contain alcohol, caffeine or a lot of sugar.
- Eat more frequently but make sure meals are balanced and light.
- Never leave any person or pet in a parked vehicle.
- Avoid dressing babies in heavy clothing or wrapping them in warm blankets.
- Check frequently on people who are elderly, ill or who may need help. If you might need help, arrange to have family, friends or neighbors check in with you at least twice a day throughout warm weather periods.
- Make sure pets have plenty of water.
- Salt tablets should only be taken if specified by your doctor. If you are on a salt-restrictive diet, check with a doctor before increasing salt intake.
- If you take prescription diuretics, antihistamines, mood-altering or antispasmodic drugs, check with a doctor about the effects of sun and heat exposure.

- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun. Awnings or louvers can reduce the heat entering a house by as much as 80 percent.

## **If you go outside**

- Plan strenuous outdoor activities for early or late in the day when temperatures are cooler; then gradually build up tolerance for warmer conditions.
- Take frequent breaks when working outdoors.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sun block and light-colored, loose-fitting clothes when outdoors.
- At first signs of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headaches, muscle cramps), move to a cooler location, rest for a few minutes and slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical attention immediately if you do not feel better.
- Avoid sunburn: it slows the skin's ability to cool itself. Use a sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (sun protection factor) rating.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes. A cool shower immediately after coming in from hot temperatures can result in hypothermia, particularly for elderly or very young people.

## **If the power goes out or air conditioning is not available**

- If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine.
- Ask your doctor about any prescription medicine you keep refrigerated. (If the power goes out, most medicine will be fine to leave in a closed refrigerator for at least three hours.)
- Keep a few bottles of water in your freezer; if the power goes out, move them to your refrigerator and keep the doors shut.

# Windstorms

*Central Wisconsin is not immune to storms producing strong winds. By taking action now, you can save lives and reduce the damage caused by windstorms and other weather-related hazards.*



## What to do before a windstorm

- Contact your local emergency management office or the National Weather Service to find out what types of storms are most likely to occur in your community.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit.
- Contact vendors to learn the proper use of home generators.
- Find out who in your area might need special assistance, specifically the elderly, disabled, and non-English speaking neighbors.
- Check with your veterinarian for animal care instructions in an emergency situation.
- If you live on a coastal or inland shoreline, be familiar with evacuation routes.
- Know what emergency plans are in place at your workplace, school and daycare center.
- Conduct a home safety evaluation to find out which nearby trees could fall in a windstorm.
- If you have an electric garage door opener, locate the manual override.
- **What to do during a windstorm**
- Don't panic. Take quick action to protect yourself and help others.

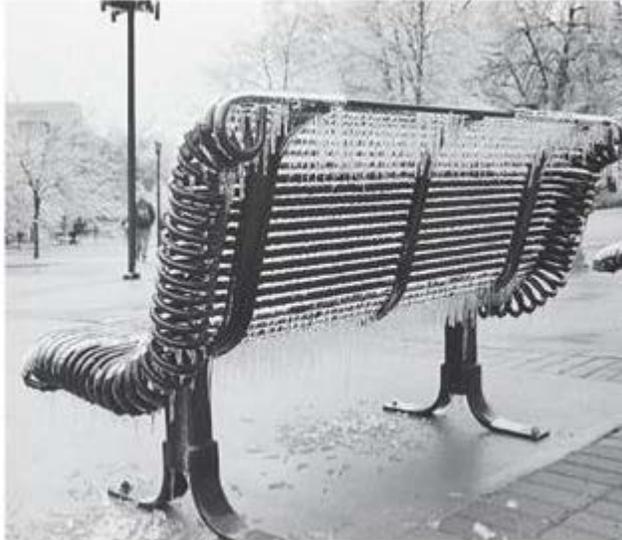
- Turn off the stove if you're cooking when the power goes out, and turn off natural gas appliances.
- If you are indoors, move away from windows or objects that could fall. Go to lower floors in multi-story homes.
- If you are outdoors, move into a building. Avoid downed electric power lines, utility poles and trees.
- If you are driving, pull off the road and stop away from trees. If possible, walk into a safe building. Avoid overpasses, power lines and other hazards.
- Listen to your radio for emergency instructions.

## What to do after a windstorm

- Check yourself and those around you for injuries.
- Evacuate damaged buildings. Do not re-enter until declared safe by authorities.
- Call 9-1-1 only to report a life threatening emergency.
- If you smell gas or hear a hissing sound indoors — open windows and leave the building. Turn off the gas source and call your gas company. Do not use matches, candles, open flames or electric switches indoors.
- If the power goes out, keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep food frozen for up to two days.
- Provide assistance to your neighbors, especially the elderly or disabled.
- Try to make contact with your out-of-area phone contact, but avoid making local telephone calls.
- Monitor your portable or NOAA weather radio for instructions or an official "all clear" notice. Radio stations will broadcast what to do, the location of emergency shelters and medical aid stations, and the extent of damage.

# Winter Storms

Winter storms can range from moderate snow over a few hours to blizzard conditions with blinding, wind-driven snow or freezing rain that lasts several days. The time to prepare is before the snow falls or ice forms.



## Preparing for winter storms

- Listen to your radio or television for winter storm forecasts and other information.
- Prepare your home for cold weather. Install storm windows. Insulate outside walls, attics and crawl spaces. Wrap pipes, especially those near cold outer walls or in attics or crawl spaces. Repair leaks in the roof, around the doors and in the windows.
- Have appropriate cold weather clothing available.
- If you have a kerosene heater, refuel your heater outside and remember to keep it at least three feet from flammable objects.
- Make sure your fireplace functions properly.
- Have rock salt and sand on hand for traction on ice.
- Fill your gas tank before the snow starts falling.

## During a winter storm

- Wear several layers of loose fitting, light weight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Wear mittens rather than gloves. Wear a warm, woolen cap.
- Do not drive unnecessarily.

- Reduce the temperature in your home to conserve fuel.
- Heat only the areas of your home you are using. Close doors and curtains or cover windows and doors with blankets.
- Use alternative heat methods safely. **Never** use a gas or charcoal grill, hibachi or portable propane heater to cook indoors or heat your home.
- Be careful when shoveling snow. Do not overexert yourself.
- Be sure to eat regularly. Food provides calories that maintain body heat.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia — slurred speech, disorientation, uncontrollable shivering, stumbling, drowsiness and body temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit or less.
- If you become trapped outside, get out of the wind and stay dry. Build a lean-to or snow cave if nothing else is available. Do not eat snow; it will make you too cold.

## If in your vehicle

- Make sure someone knows where you are going. Stay on the main roads.
- If you must stop, remain inside the vehicle. Use a bright distress flag or your hazard lights to draw attention to your vehicle.
- If trapped in a blizzard, clear your tail pipe and run your engine and heater for 10 minutes every hour. Open your window slightly.
- During night hours, keep the dome light on in the car so rescue crews can see your vehicle.
- Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle. Include a three-day supply of water and non-perishable food that can be eaten without being cooked. Include a blanket or sleeping bag for each passenger, a flashlight, cell phone, shovel, sack of sand or kitty litter, booster cables, flare, coffee can with lid and toilet paper.

# Household Fires

*Fires in homes are most often caused by cooking accidents, smoking or unsafe use of woodstoves or space heaters. Here are some things you can do to avoid a home fire or protect yourself during a fire.*



## Protecting against fires

- Install smoke detectors in or near all sleeping areas and on every level of your home, including the basement. Check smoke detectors on a regular basis and replace the batteries twice yearly.
  - Have A-B-C type fire extinguishers. Teach family members how to use them.
  - Know the location of all exits including windows. If you live in an apartment, count the number of doorways between your apartment and the two nearest exits.
  - Know two ways out of every room in case smoke or flames block your primary exit.
  - Choose a meeting place outside the home.
  - Have an escape plan and practice it with your family. This will help ensure you can get out quickly when there is no time for mistakes.
  - Keep folding or chain style ladders stored in each upstairs bedroom.
  - Use alternative heat sources, such as woodstoves or space heaters, safely:
- Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, barbecues, or most portable or propane heaters for indoor heating.
  - Before using an alternative heat source, read the manufacturer's instructions.
  - Do not smoke in the bedroom, on the couch or anywhere you might fall asleep while smoking.
  - Sleep with your bedroom door closed.
  - Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street and that fire trucks can reach your home.
  - Have fire-fighting materials available: dry powder, fire extinguisher, heavy tarp or blanket, and water.

## If fire strikes

- If there is a fire — evacuate. Do not go back inside. Call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house.
- Never use water on an electrical fire.
- Smother oil and grease fires in the kitchen with baking soda or salt, or put a lid over the flame if it is burning in a pan.
- If caught in smoke — drop to your hands and knees and crawl; breathe shallowly through your nose and use your blouse, shirt or jacket as a filter.
- If you must move through flames — hold your breath, move quickly, cover your head and hair, keep your head down and close your eyes as much as possible.
- If your clothes catch fire, “stop, drop and roll” until the fire is out.
- If you are in a room and cannot escape, leave the door closed, stay low to the floor and hang a white or light-colored sheet outside the window.
- Be sure all family members are accounted for. If someone is missing, let the fire department know.

# Power Outages

*Power outages can cause a number of safety concerns. Knowing the following information can help.*



## **Before a power outage**

- Register life-sustaining and medical equipment with your utility company.
- Consider buying a generator. When installing a generator, follow the instructions carefully. Keep your generator outside and run a cord inside. Don't connect your generator to main service panels — it's dangerous!
- Make sure your disaster preparedness kit contains light sticks, flashlights, a battery-powered radio with extra batteries and a wind-up clock.
- Have a corded telephone available — cordless phones will not work when the power is out.
- Have an alternative heat source and supply of fuel.
- If you own an electric garage door opener, know how to open the door without power.

## **During a power outage**

- Turn off lights and electrical appliances except for the refrigerator and freezer. Even if it is dark, turn light switches and buttons on lamps or appliances to the "off" position.
- Unplug computers and other sensitive equipment to protect them from possible surges when the power is restored.
- Leave one lamp on so you will know when power is restored. Wait at least 15 minutes after power is restored before turning on other appliances.

- Conserve water, especially if you use well water.
- Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, barbecues or portable or propane heaters for indoor heating—they use oxygen and create carbon monoxide that can cause suffocation.
- Candles can cause a fire. It's far better to use battery-operated flashlights or glow sticks for lighting.
- Using a kerosene heater, gas lantern or stove inside the house can be dangerous. Maintain proper ventilation at all times to avoid a build up of toxic fumes.
- Stay away from downed power lines and sagging trees with broken limbs.

## **Keep food safe**

- Use and store food carefully to prevent food-borne illness when power outages make refrigeration unavailable.
- Use foods first that can spoil most rapidly.
- Keep doors to refrigerators closed. Your refrigerator's freezer will keep food frozen for up to a day. A separate fully-loaded freezer will keep food frozen for two days.
- Use an ice chest packed with ice or snow to keep food cold. Buy dry ice to save frozen food. Do not handle dry ice with your bare hands. Use blocks or bags of ice to save refrigerator foods.
- Use caution if storing food outside during winter to keep it cold. The outside temperature varies, especially in the sun. Frozen food may thaw and refrigerator food may become warm enough to grow bacteria. Food stored outside must be secured from contamination by animals.

## **If in doubt, throw it out**

- Never taste suspect food. Even if food looks and smells fine, illness-causing bacteria may be present.

# Using a Generator during Power Outages

## Don't overload your generator

- Determine the amount of power you will need to operate those things you plan to connect to the generator.
- Light bulb wattage indicates the power needed for lighting. Appliance and equipment labels indicate their power requirements.
- If you can't determine the amount of power you will need; ask an electrician.
- Make sure your generator produces more power than will be drawn by the things you connect to the generator including the initial surge when it is turned on. If your generator does not produce enough power to operate everything at once, stagger the use of your equipment.
- If your equipment draws more power than the generator can produce, you may blow a fuse on the generator or damage the connected equipment.

## Use your generator safely

- Incorrect generator use can lead to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution and fire. Follow the directions supplied with the generator.

## Never use a portable generator indoors

- Never use a portable generator in a garage, carport, basement, crawlspace or other enclosed or partially-enclosed area, even with ventilation. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home.
- If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get to fresh air right away — do not delay!
- Install home CO alarms that are battery-operated or have battery back-up. Test batteries frequently and replace when needed.

## Using your generator outdoors

- Place the generator away from windows, doors, and vents that could allow CO to come indoors.

- To avoid electrocution, keep the generator dry. Do not use in rain or wet conditions. Operate it on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure. Make sure your hands are dry before touching the generator.



## Use and store generator fuel safely

- Turn the generator off and let it cool before refueling. Gasoline spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.
- Store generator fuel in an approved safety can outside of living areas in a locked shed or other protected area. Local laws may restrict use or storage of fuel. Ask your local fire department for information.
- If you spill fuel or do not seal its container properly, invisible vapors can travel along the ground and be ignited by an appliance's pilot light or arcs from electric switches in the appliance.
- Use the type of fuel recommended in the generator instructions or on its label.

## Connect your generator correctly

- Plug appliances directly into the generator, or use a heavy duty, outdoor-rated extension cord that is rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads.
- Never try to power house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet, a practice known as "back feeding." It can lead to the electrocution of utility workers or neighbors served by the same utility transformer.
- The only safe way to connect a generator to house wiring is to have a qualified electrician install a power transfer switch.

## The safest way to get emergency power

- Permanently installed stationary generators are the best way to provide home backup power during a power outage.

# Purifying Household Water

*The treatments described below work only in situations where the water is unsafe because of the presence of bacteria or viruses. If you suspect the water is unsafe because of chemicals, oils, poisonous substances, sewage, or other contaminants, do not use the water for drinking.*

## Storing water safely

- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Store at least a three-day supply of water per person.
- Collect the water from a safe supply.
- Thoroughly washed plastic containers such as soft drink bottles are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums.
- Seal water containers tightly, label with date, and store in a cool, dark place.
- Replace water every six months.
- Never reuse a container that contained toxic materials such as pesticides, solvents, chemicals, oil or antifreeze.

## Water purification

- There are two primary ways to treat water: boiling and adding bleach. If tap water is unsafe because of surface water contamination (from floods, streams or lakes), boiling is the best method.
- Cloudy water should be filtered before boiling or adding bleach.

- Filter water using coffee filters, paper towels, cheese cloth or a cotton plug in a funnel.

## Boiling

- Boiling is the safest way to purify water.
- Bring the water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes.
- Let the water cool before drinking.

## Purifying by adding liquid chlorine bleach

- If boiling is not possible, treat water by adding liquid household bleach, such as Clorox™ or Purex™. Household bleach is typically between 5 percent and 6 percent chlorine. Avoid using bleaches that contain perfumes, dyes and other additives. Be sure to read the label.
- Place the water (filtered, if necessary) in a clean container. Add the amount of bleach according to the table below.
- Mix thoroughly and allow to stand for at least 30 minutes before using (60 minutes if the water is cloudy or very cold).

Treating Water with a 5-6 Percent Liquid Chlorine Bleach Solution		
Volume of Water to be Treated	Treating Clear/Cloudy Water: Bleach Solution to Add	Treating Very Cold, or Surface Water: Bleach Solution to Add
1 quart/1 liter	3 drops	5 drops
1/2 gallon/2 quarts/2 liters	5 drops	10 drops
1 gallon	1/8 tsp	1/4 tsp
5 gallons	1/2 tsp	1 tsp
10 gallons	1 tsp	2 tsp

# Turning Off Utilities

*When disaster strikes, it often affects one or more of the utilities in your home. It is important to know where the main controls are located, and when and how to turn them off.*

## Electricity

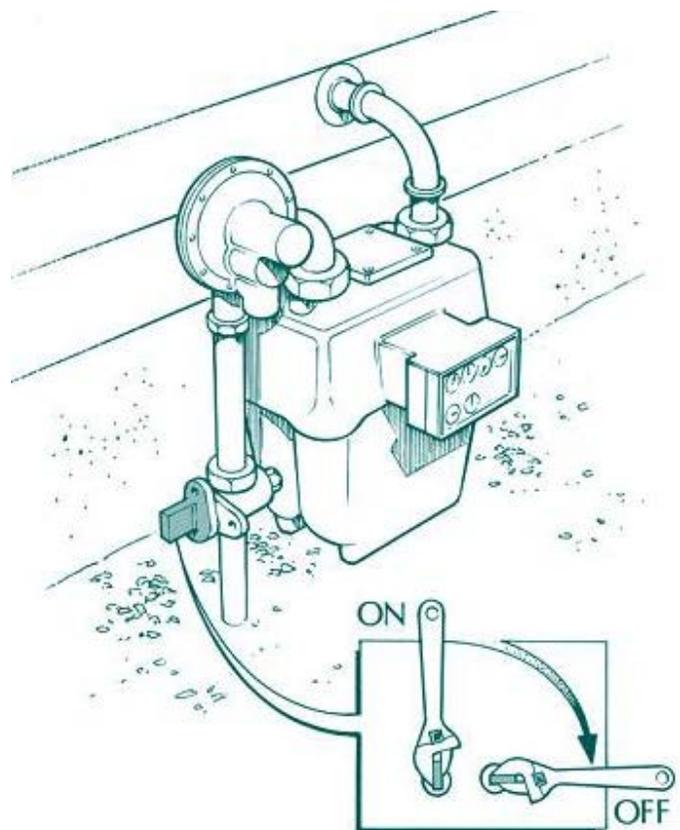
- Locate your main electrical switch or fuse panel, and learn how to turn off the electrical power system.
- If a generator is used as a backup power supply, remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Connect lights and appliances directly to the generator and not to the electrical system.

## Water

- Turn off water at the main meter or at the water main leading into the house. This will prevent contaminated water from entering your water heater and plumbing.
- Turn off the valve — turn to the right. This will require a special valve wrench, available from a hardware store. Make sure you have the tool readily available.
- Sewer system
- Make sure your sewer system is functioning properly before using it. This will prevent the contamination of your home, and possibly, the drinking water supply.

## Gas meter (illustration below)

- Locate your gas meter and valve.
- Have a wrench immediately available for turning off the gas supply.
- If you smell natural or propane gas, evacuate immediately and leave the area. Go to where you no longer smell gas. Do not use matches, lighters, open flame appliances or operate electrical switches. Sparks could ignite gas causing an explosion.
- Shut off gas **only** if you smell gas or hear a hissing noise. Contact the gas company to turn the gas back on.



**It is best to learn how to turn off household utilities before disaster strikes!**

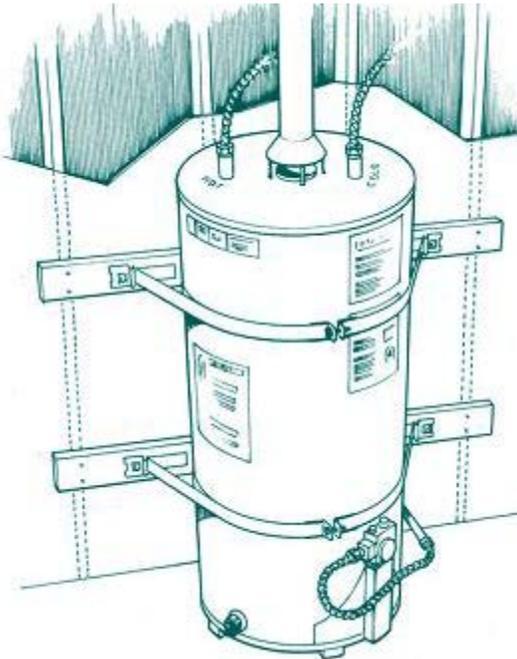
# Securing Your Water Heater

*Fresh water after a disaster may be as close as your water heater — provided, of course, it remains standing upright. You can protect this valuable resource by securing your water heater to the wall studs.*

## First, check for plumbers' tape

Experts modified the procedure for strapping water heaters following the 1989 Loma Prieta and 1994 Northridge earthquake. Prior to this, a single strap of plumbers' tape was commonly used. Because so many tanks burst through this strapping, experts now recommend:

- Secure both the top and the bottom, rather than just the top or just the middle, of the tank.
- Use heavy-gauge metal strapping rather than plumbers' tape. **PLUMBERS' TAPE** — it is **not** strong enough to prevent water heaters from tipping over.
- Replace all copper and metal piping with flexible natural gas and water line connectors.



## Second, secure tank with heavy-gauge metal straps, top and bottom

- Commercially available strapping kits make this a relatively easy process. These can be found in many hardware stores on the aisle displaying the water heaters.
- These kits come complete with the strapping, lag screws, washers, spacers and tension bolts.
- You can also choose to assemble the strapping materials yourself using heavy-gauge metal straps and 3-inch lag screws.
- To prevent the tank from tipping backwards, there should be very little space between it and the wall. If there is more than 1 or 2 inches, attach a wooden block to the wall with long lag screws.
- Wrap the heavy-gauge metal strapping 1-1/2 times around the tank. Start by placing the strapping at the back of the tank. Bring it to the front and then take it back to the wall.
- Secure this strapping to the wall studs or the wood block using several 1/4-inch x 3-inch or longer lag screws with oversized washers.
- If you are securing it directly into concrete, use 1/4-inch expansion bolts in place of the screws.

## An emergency source of water

- Water can easily be accessed by connecting a garden hose to the drain spout, and by opening a faucet somewhere in the house.
- Make sure the electricity or natural gas is off before opening the drain.

# About Terrorism

*Terrorists look for visible targets where they can avoid detection before or after an attack such as international airports, large cities, major public events, resorts, and high-profile landmarks. Preparing for terrorism is critical, just as for other types of disasters.*



September 11, 2011  
World Trade Center  
New York City, NY  
Photo by: Robert J. Fisch

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- If you see what appears to be a dangerous situation, call 9-1-1 and explain your concerns to a 9-1-1 operator. The operator will help determine what actions should be taken.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave your luggage unattended.
- Learn where emergency exits are located, and how to quickly evacuate a building, transportation corridor or congested public area.
- Stay clear of heavy or breakable objects that could move, fall or break in an explosion.

## Prepare for building explosion

The use of explosives by terrorists can result in collapsed buildings and fires. People who live or work in a multi-level building should follow these guidelines:

- Learn the emergency evacuation procedures that are in place.
- Keep fire extinguishers in working order. Know where they are located and how to use them.
- Learn first aid and CPR.
- Businesses and organizations should keep and maintain a disaster supply kit on each floor of their buildings.

## *If an explosion occurs*

- Immediately get under a sturdy table or desk if things are falling around you.
- Heavy smoke and poisonous gases collect first along the ceiling. Stay below the smoke at all times.

## *If trapped in debris*

- If you have a flashlight, use it to help rescuers locate you.
- Stay in your area so that you don't kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so that rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort — shouting can cause a person to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

## *If there is a fire*

- Stay low to the floor and exit the building as quickly and calmly as possible.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth, if possible.
- Test closed doors for heat with the palm of your hand and forearm on the lower and upper portions of the door. If it is not hot, brace yourself against the door and open it slowly. If it is hot or warm to the touch, do not open the door. Seek an alternate escape route.

## Biological agents

- Biological agents are organisms or toxins that may harm people, livestock or crops. Because biological agents cannot necessarily be detected and may take time to grow and cause disease, it may be difficult to determine that a biological attack has occurred.
- A person affected by a biological agent requires the immediate attention of professional medical personnel. Some agents are contagious and victims may need to be quarantined. Some medical facilities may not be receiving victims for fear of contaminating the hospital population.

More information is available at [www.bt.cdc.gov/](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/) and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

# Radiation Exposure

*One possible source of radiation exposure is a “dirty bomb.” A dirty bomb is a small explosive device packaged with radioactive materials. During any event that releases radiation, your best protection is to follow the recommendations of authorities.*



## Stay inside

- Stay inside your home or office unless instructed by civil authorities to leave. Close the windows, turn off the heating or air-conditioning, and stay near the center of the building. Once the initial blast is over, radioactive materials may be spread in the smoke and debris in the air. By staying inside you will reduce any potential exposure to airborne radioactive material. If there is a basement, go there.

## Listen to the radio

- When you learn that radioactive materials have been released in an area near you—either accidentally or intentionally—tune your radio to the emergency broadcasting network for instructions. Government agencies will let you know how to protect yourself. Keep a battery-powered radio handy in case electrical power goes out in your area.

## Follow instructions

- The best way to avoid exposure to radiation is to do what experts advise. If told to evacuate, do so promptly. Take items you will need for an extended absence, such as prescription medicines and clothing. Listen for news about the location of the radioactive cloud. Even if it has already passed, radioactive contamination may have fallen on the ground and experts will recommend the best ways to safely leave the area.

## If you suspect you are contaminated

- If you believe you have been exposed to radioactive materials, you should carefully remove your outer layer of clothing and put it in a plastic bag; then take a warm shower to rinse off any radioactive materials. Place the sealed plastic bag in a room away from people.

## Seek help if needed

- Special assistance centers will be set up as soon as possible. Center locations will be made available through the media and on health department and other emergency service Web sites. If this information is not yet available, go to a police or fire station located outside of the affected area. If you were near the explosion or believe you were in the path of the cloud, tell the staff at the station or assistance center.

## Watch what you eat

- Avoid drinking fresh milk or eating fruits and vegetables grown in the affected area. Wait until the Department of Health announces that produce and dairy products are safe to eat and drink. Milk, fruit and vegetables are okay to eat if they were bought or picked before the radiation was released and were stored indoors. Food stored in cans or bags is also safe to eat. Be sure to thoroughly rinse off containers before opening.

# Chemical Agents

*Chemical warfare agents are gases, liquids or solids that can poison people, animals and plants. Chemical warfare agents can cause injuries and death. How serious the injuries are depends on the type of chemical, the amount and the length of exposure.*



## What are chemical agents?

- The main chemical warfare agents are sulfur mustard (mustard gas) and nerve agents such as Sarin and VX. These agents are typically released as a vapor or liquid. During a chemical attack, the greatest danger would come from breathing the vapors. If a large amount of chemical were released as an aerosol, people's skin might be exposed to the agent as droplets.

## Sulfur mustard: symptoms and treatment

- Sulfur mustard can cause skin to become red and irritated. Larger amounts will make the skin blister.
- Sulfur mustard can damage your eyes causing irritation, redness and swelling of the lids.
- Breathing in sulfur mustard can cause throat irritation, sinus pain and coughing. Breathing in large amounts will damage the lungs.
- If you are exposed to sulfur mustard, it may take four to eight hours before you feel symptoms. However, after a relatively small exposure, symptoms may take up to 24 hours to develop.
- Medical staff can treat you with soothing lotions, eye drops and pain medication. If infections develop, you may be given antibiotics.

## Nerve agents: symptoms and treatment

- A small amount of vapor can make pupils smaller, dim or blur vision, and cause eye pain, a runny nose or shortness of breath.
- Moderate amounts of vapor can cause muscle weakness, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- Exposure to large amounts of vapor can cause interruption of breathing, muscle weakness, loss of consciousness, convulsions and death.
- Effects usually appear seconds to minutes after breathing the vapor of a nerve agent.
- Exposure to small amounts of vapor may cause only smaller than normal pupils and may take an hour to appear.
- If you are exposed to a large amount of a nerve agent and have a runny nose, difficulty breathing, or nausea and vomiting, you may be treated with the medicines atropine or pralidoxime.

## What you should do if there is a chemical attack

- If there is a chemical attack, authorities will tell you either to evacuate the area immediately or to seek shelter.
- If you have symptoms of exposure, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- If you were outside before taking shelter and think you may have been exposed to a chemical agent:
- Take off your outer clothes, put them in a plastic bag and seal the bag. Tell emergency staff about the sealed bag so they can remove it safely.
- Wash or take a cool shower (do not use hot water). Use lots of soap. Do not put soap in your eyes.
- If you leave the area, tell emergency or medical staff at your new location that you may have been exposed.



Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.

# Family Emergency Plan



Make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. Before an emergency happens, sit down together and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supply kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.

Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-Town Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill out the following information for each family member and keep it up to date.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Write down where your family spends the most time: work, school and other places you frequent. Schools, daycare providers, workplaces and apartment buildings should all have site-specific emergency plans that you and your family need to know about.

### Work Location One

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Location One

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Work Location Two

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Location Two

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Work Location Three

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Location Three

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other place you frequent

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other place you frequent

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Telephone Number	Policy Number

Dial 911 for Emergencies

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FEMA

# Ready®

# Family Emergency Plan

Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.



Make sure your family has a plan in case of an emergency. Fill out these cards and give one to each member of your family to make sure they know who to call and where to meet in case of an emergency.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS & INFORMATION:

**Family Emergency Plan** 

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ready® 

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ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS & INFORMATION:

**Family Emergency Plan** 

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
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OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

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OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

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