

Preparedness Essentials

Preparedness Checklist

Disasters disrupt our lives. Some disasters, like floods and home fires, can occur anywhere. Other disasters, like wildfires and hurricanes, are more common in certain areas. Climate change is causing more frequent and extreme weather events. This increases our risk of death, injury, property loss and disruption. But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones and your home.



Be Prepared

Being prepared means that you:

- Know what hazards, like tornadoes or floods, are likely to happen in your community.
- Have plans in place so that you and your loved ones know how to respond.
- Have a way to monitor emergency conditions in your area.
- Have emergency skills, such as CPR and first aid.
- Have emergency supplies, like food, water and medicine, so that you can meet your basic needs.

- Have a battery-powered radio.
- Plan to monitor weather conditions near you.



Learn Emergency Skills

Prepare now so that you have critical skills and can meet your basic needs.

- Learn first aid and CPR.
- Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power.



Understand Your Risks

Some hazards, such as floods and home fires, can happen anywhere. Others, including earthquakes and hurricanes, are more common in certain areas. Reach out to your state or local office of emergency management agency to learn more about your local risks.



Gather Emergency Supplies

Gather food, water and medicine. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies. Stores and pharmacies might be closed.
- Have a 1-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.



Plan to Stay Connected

In a disaster, it is important to stay connected and informed.

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government.
- Have a backup battery or a way to charge your cell phone.



Gather Emergency Supplies

- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up). Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.
- Customize your kits to meet your household's needs and the season.

Basic supplies include:

- Water: 1 gallon per person, per day
- Food: non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items
- Can opener
- Medications and medical items
- Flashlight or battery-powered lanterns
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Hats, gloves, boots, coats, etc. (cold weather)
- Sun hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, bug spray, etc. (warm weather)
- Change of clothes
- Map(s) of the area
- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up).



Make Plans to Stay Safe

Stay or go? Depending on the emergency, you may need to stay where you are or evacuate to stay safe.

If you need to go somewhere else, think through these questions:

- Where will I go?
- How will I get there?
- Where will I stay?
- What will I bring with me?



Plan to Reconnect With Loved Ones

- If separated, or if the phone or internet is down, have a plan to communicate with loved ones.
- Complete a contact card for each member of your household. Ensure that they carry it with them.
- Text is best. A text message may go through when a phone call will not.
- Designate an out-of-town contact who can help your household reconnect. It may be easier to reach people outside the affected area.
- Agree to meet in a specific place to help you reconnect with loved ones when it is safe.
 - If you need to leave your home, choose a specific location nearby.
 - If you need to leave your community, choose a specific location outside your community.



Plan to Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have bad feelings, stress or anxiety after a disaster or other emergency.
- Plan to eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- Know that you can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990**.

Prepare so you can protect.

For more information, visit redcross.org/prepare

Download the Emergency App

