

Preparing a Personal Family Emergency Plan

A Step by Step Guide



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Would you know what to do if an emergency occurred? Would your child, alone at home after school, know the proper procedures to follow if the weather suddenly turned threatening?

This book has been designed to help your household prepare for and respond intelligently to severe weather and other emergencies which might arise in our area.

No amount of preventative measures can avert a tornado or crippling winter storm. In these instances, the uninformed are at the most risk.

Please invest thirty minutes of your family's time in working through this book together, so that everyone in your household is prepared to act confidently and correctly, should an emergency arise. There are spaces throughout the book that you will fill in with important information to personalize this guide to your own circumstances. Once you have made this book your own, it should be kept in a prominent, accessible location. If you move to another residence, revise it. And do review it occasionally, perhaps every New Year's Day, as a commitment to each other's health and safety.

Preparedness for emergency could make all the difference in the world to you and those you love. This book will help you make that difference.

Work through this book with your family. Fill in all appropriate blanks. Be sure that every member of your household knows where the book is located. We suggest hanging the book near the telephone, NOT filed in a drawer or bookcase. Determine that location NOW, and write it down.

When not in use, this book should be kept:

Location: _____

Ensure that your family knows the methods by which they might be notified of an emergency. A siren may sound, or bulletins may be issued over local radio and television stations. In some cases, notification might come by telephone, or through a public-address system.

PREPARE AN EVACUATION KIT:

Have on hand a working radio that will operate on battery power. Have on hand a supply of the appropriate sized batteries to operate your emergency radio.

Have on hand a reliable flashlight, extra batteries, and a supply of candles, matches and canned food to be used if there is an extended power failure.

Prepare a first aid kit using a flat moisture-proof container with individually wrapped material. Don't make it too complicated.

Have on hand a reasonable supply of drinking water. If advised that the emergency involves a spill that endangers drinking water, immediately obtain tap water for future use. Fill a bath tub.

After your family has read this book hold an emergency drill, to ensure that each family member is able to respond appropriately.

Locate all shut-off switches and valves, flag these switches with brightly coloured tape or tag, and show all family members how to shut off this equipment.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Bear in mind that following a disaster, candles, batteries, flashlights, bottled water and disposable diapers are often not available at any price.

REMEMBER! Extreme caution must be used when relighting any gas appliances and only a person knowledgeable in the hazards involved should attempt to do so.

Main Breaker_____

Furnace_____

Air Conditioner_____

Furnace Pilot Light_____

Stove Pilot Light_____

Hot Water Tank Pilot Light_____

Other_____

THE FIRST STEPS....

WHEN NOTIFIED IN PERSON BY POLICE OR OTHER OFFICIALS:

- or if you detect abnormal weather patterns
- or if you notice an unusual odor in the air

TURN YOUR RADIO ON!

Tune your radio to

AM

FM

If there is an emergency, these radio stations will be notified immediately by authorities. They will broadcast the appropriate instructions for you to follow.

Depending on the nature of the emergency, TV broadcasting may be interrupted with warnings or instructions. You are advised, however to rely on your battery-powered radio, which will broadcast information on both extensive and more localized emergency situations. If you must rely on TV, make sure that you choose a local channel.

DO NOT TURN YOUR RADIO OFF until the official “all clear” has been issued.

If advised that the emergency may involve potentially toxic fumes, take the following precautions and shelter in place:

- ✓ Close all doors and windows tightly
- ✓ Turn off all heating and ventilating equipment
- ✓ Turn off all pilot lights
- ✓ Do not use matches or lighters
- ✓ Close all fireplace dampers
- ✓ Close all drapes and curtains

Gather family members and pets, if they are outside the home in the immediate area. Agree now on a meeting place in the home – the kitchen for example.

Our meeting place is _____

IF CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL:

If your children are in school or daycare, do not attempt to bring them home. School officials will be notified if an emergency exists, and will begin the proper procedures to protect the children in their care.

DO NOT USE THE TELEPHONE unless you need emergency assistance.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

At times, due to a large-scale emergency such as a flood, major fire, or chemical release, it may be necessary to evacuate people from their homes, schools, or businesses. These evacuations may last only a few hours, or they may last several days. If you are required to evacuate, the following guidelines will assist you in the process.

When to Evacuate

Do not evacuate unless instructed to do so by radio, television, or emergency personnel. Unnecessary traffic could hamper emergency operations, and exposure to toxic smoke from a fire or exposure to chemicals could put you at risk.

Where to Go

Listen carefully to the evacuation instructions as they are broadcast, and follow them exactly. Be prepared to take the most direct route to a major highway, and travel away from the area, in a safe direction.

The Evacuation Checklist

No one ever enjoys being evacuated from their home. In an emergency however, it may be necessary for the authorities to ask you and your family to leave for your own safety. This may involve several days away from home. Being well organized is the key to a successful evacuation. This checklist will help you to prepare for a situation which we hope you never have to face. Use this checklist to ensure that both you and your family are prepared, should the need to evacuate arise.

Personal Evacuation Kits

A well-equipped personal evacuation kit can mean the difference between a tolerable experience and a miserable one. Kits should be made up in advance for each family member, and kept in a small nylon tote bag. In an emergency, there may be no time to gather everything together. Items with critical shelf life, such as medications and batteries should be rotated every three months, or placed in the kit when you are ready to leave. Personal evacuation kits should be stored in a cool, dry place with easy access, such as a front closet. This will allow you to leave as quickly as possible, if the authorities request that you do so.

Family Members with Disabilities

Having a disability means you likely need to consider preparedness actions above and beyond the “basics”. Some things to think about as you get prepared are:

- Your ability to communicate may be restricted
- Your surroundings may change and look unfamiliar
- Your service animal or guide dog may be hurt or frightened
- Your health may be impacted by stress or confusion

Disasters can be overwhelming and stress may make some conditions worse for people. You may even have to ask for assistance in circumstances you usually do not. Be sure to talk to someone about how you are feeling and reach out for help if needed:

Personal Support Network

- Take the time to create a trusted support network of at least three people to assist during an emergency. Give them keys and add their contact information to a shared emergency plan. The support network should also be advised of any health conditions or medications and shown how to operate specialized medical or mobility equipment, such as lifts, wheelchairs or scooters.
- Self-identify prior to any emergency happening with your community Emergency Coordinator. It is important that your community understand and plan for any additional assistance you may require.
- Label all medical and mobile devices with your name, address and phone number.

Each kit should contain:

Adult (1 each)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Clothing for 3 days | ☐ Winter Coat (if req'd) |
| ☐ Underwear for 3 days | ☐ Pajamas, gown |
| ☐ Eyeglasses, dentures | ☐ Reading material |
| ☐ Hearing aids (if req'd) | ☐ Blanket, pillow |
| ☐ Personal Comfort Kit, consisting of: | |
| ☐ Toothbrush | ☐ Toothpaste |
| ☐ Hand Soap | ☐ Shampoo |
| ☐ Towel | ☐ Deodorant |
| ☐ Brush, comb | ☐ Sanitary napkins (if req'd) |
| ☐ Shaving kit (if req'd) | ☐ Medication(s) |
| ☐ Medical History Sheet | ☐ Prescriptions |

Children (1 each):

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Clothing for 3 days | ☐ Winter Coat (if req'd) |
| ☐ Underwear for 3 days | ☐ Pajamas |
| ☐ Eyeglasses (if req'd) | ☐ Reading material, toys, games |
| ☐ Blanket, pillow | |
| ☐ Toothbrush | ☐ Toothpaste |
| ☐ Hand Soap | ☐ Shampoo |
| ☐ Towel | ☐ Deodorant |
| ☐ Brush, comb | ☐ Medication(s) |
| ☐ Medical History Sheet | ☐ Prescriptions |
| ☐ Other: _____ | |

Infants (1 each):

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Clothing for 3 days | ☐ Diapers |
| ☐ Formula and bottles | ☐ Baby Food |
| ☐ Baby Powder | ☐ Lotion or oil |
| ☐ Several blankets | ☐ Cold weather clothing (if req'd) |
| ☐ Favorite toys | ☐ Medication(s) |
| ☐ Prescriptions | |
| ☐ Other: _____ | |

PET EVACUATION**Pets (1 each):**

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Collar | ☐ Leash |
| ☐ Carrier | ☐ Food Dish |
| ☐ Copy of License | ☐ Health Records |
| ☐ Food for 2 weeks | ☐ Muzzle (if req'd) |

All items should be labeled with your name and address and your pet's name. Health records should include proof of vaccination against all diseases as recommended by your vet. Pet owners should be aware that failure to produce proof of vaccination might result in your pet being turned away from the animal shelter. Pets are rarely permitted (guide dogs excepted) in human shelters.

General:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Flashlight | ☐ Portable Radio |
| ☐ Batteries | ☐ First Aid Kit |
| ☐ Area Map | ☐ Manual Can Opener |

Copies of important papers such as:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Bank Records | ☐ Vehicle Registrations |
| ☐ Insurance Policies | ☐ Will(s) |
| ☐ Marriage License | ☐ Medical Records |

These should be updated regularly, and should be kept in a sealed, watertight container.

Out of Area Contact Person:

During an emergency, long distance telephone service will often continue even if local service is interrupted. For this reason, it is a good idea to have the name and telephone number of a contact person who lives well outside of your area. This will permit family members to contact one another and ensure that everyone is okay.

Our Out of Area Contact Person is: _____

Telephone number: (____) _____

BEFORE LEAVING HOME:

Do:

- ☐ Monitor local radio and television stations for evacuation instructions. Locations of shelters and evacuation routes will often be given.
- ☐ **Ensure that your vehicle has adequate fuel. Fuel may be unavailable in the affected area for several days.**
- ☐ Turn off gas
- ☐ Turn off electricity
- ☐ Turn off water
- ☐ Secure all doors and windows

Do Not:

- ___ Release pets to fend for themselves. They pose problems for emergency officials, and can become easily confused. You may never see them again.
- ___ Leave pets in the home alone.
- ___ Bring large quantities of items such as televisions or furniture. The shelter is for people.
- ___ Bring valuables such as jewelry or large quantities of cash.
- ___ Post a sign on your door telling people where you have gone.

FIRE

PREPARING FOR A FIRE

Practicing a home fire escape plan is one of the most important actions you can take to protect your own life and the lives of others. Your community Fire Department urges you to develop and practice a fire escape plan for your home. Remember, an hour of pre-planning may save years of life. Make regular fire drills a family affair.

HOW TO DEVELOP A FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

Install smoke detectors on each floor of your home and test them regularly. They will provide early warning of fire.

Install fire extinguishers in high-risk areas of your home i.e.: kitchen, furnace area, etc. And make sure everyone knows how to use them. Remember, should you feel uncomfortable about using the extinguisher or fighting the fire, **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.**

A closed door provides some protection against fire or fumes. Keep basement or utility room doors closed at all times and close all doors at bedtime.

Check your home for fire hazards and eliminate them as you find them. Your fire department will be glad to advise you on any questions of fire safety for your home.

Draw a floor plan of your home showing all possible exits from each room. Where possible, plan a main exit route and an alternate exit route from each room.

If your home has more than one story, have an emergency escape ladder available on upper floors. Make sure all family members know how to use this ladder.

Make certain that everyone understands that if they hear the smoke detector, or hear someone shouting "FIRE" they should immediately evacuate the home.

Decide on a meeting place outside your home. In case of fire, go to the meeting place. Someone should be sent to phone the fire department.

Make certain that everyone in your home knows **NOT TO RE-ENTER A BURNING BUILDING.** Firefighters are properly equipped and trained to perform rescue operations.

What You Should Do

Raise the alarm. When you detect fire or smoke shout the warning to other occupants. Children and older people will need help. Don't wait to get dressed, shoes and one blanket per person is enough. Assign someone to call the fire department after everyone is out. Never waste time trying to extinguish anything other than a very small fire.

Our meeting place is:

A hot door is a warning. Never open a door without first checking it for heat. If it is warm, leave it closed and go to a window. If you cannot escape from the window, wait by the open window or on a balcony for rescue. Place bedding at door cracks to keep the smoke out.

Heat and deadly gases are the main killers and even small fires are dangerous. The open staircase may become a chimney allowing heat or smoke to rise to the highest floor level. If you cannot leave an upper room by a window, close the door and wait by the open window for rescue.

Tell firefighters if anyone remains in the building. Leave rescue operations to them, unless you can safely raise a ladder or help anyone down from a window or roof before help arrives.

Never go back into a burning building for any reason whatsoever. Many lives are lost through the deadly effects of fumes, even in small fires. Never risk a life in an attempt to save personal possessions.

In most communities, the number for the fire department is: **911**

If your community does not have 911 service, the number for the local fire department is:

The date of our last fire drill was:

Our smoke detector batteries were last changed:

Our fire extinguishers were last checked:

POISON CONTROL

You have approximately 250 poisons in your household, stored in places accessible to small, curious children eager to climb, explore taste, and swallow. In order to avoid an accident, you should:

Keep medicines in their original containers and locked up.

Do not take medicines in front of children.

Return all old medicines to your pharmacist for safe disposal.

Do not leave cosmetics lying around on dressers or vanities.

Do not leave your purse lying around.

Keep all household cleaners, detergents, solvents, paints, and insecticides in locked cabinets.

Clean out old medicines and paints regularly.

Move all dangerous household plants to a safe place and teach children never to eat plants.

In the Event of an Accident:

Think clearly and stay calm!

Identify the suspected poison and the amount taken.

Immediately contact the Poison Control Centre. They will advise you on what to do until Paramedics arrive.

If necessary, take the individual to the hospital emergency and bring the suspected poison with you.

Poison Control Centre – Telephone Number: _____

Ambulance (Paramedics) Telephone Number: _____

FLOOD

PREPARING FOR A FLOOD

Flood damage costs millions of dollars annually, to say nothing of the cost in terms of human lives and suffering. Each of us has a responsibility to protect our homes and families to the best of our abilities. By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, you can do your part to minimize flood damage.

In case of flood threats or flash flooding, local government authorities try to keep residents informed of developments. Through the media, they will recommend actions to take to limit or prevent disaster and provide detailed instructions, should the need arise.

IN CASE OF FLOOD THREAT

Shut off power in premises in immediate danger of flooding. Don't attempt to do so if the main switch is in a location that has already been flooded. If conditions are wet around a switch, stand on a dry board and use a dry stick to turn off the switch.

Special precautions should be taken to safeguard or minimize damage to electrical, natural gas or propane heating equipment. If warning time permits, consult your supplier for steps to be taken.

If through taste, colour or odor, you suspect that your drinking water has been contaminated, purify it before drinking by boiling, or by adding purification tablets, or chlorinating it with a bleaching compound. If the latter is used add one or two drops per litre and allow to stand for 30 minutes before drinking.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

Turn the radio on (station and frequency)

Our emergency radio is located at

Extra batteries are located at

SEVERE WINTER STORM

PREPARING FOR A SEVERE WINTER STORM

Preparing your Automobile:

Make sure that your vehicles have been properly serviced before the onset of winter.

Stock each vehicle with emergency items; shovel, gravel or sand, sleeping bag, heat candles, matches, high-energy foods such as granola bars, spare socks, mittens and a hat, a container for melting snow, a brightly coloured cloth to signal for assistance. Ideally, these items should be in the car (not in the trunk) as trunks can freeze shut.

Preparing your Home:

Make sure that you have a safe, alternative heat source available in case of power interruptions. If you have a fireplace, sufficient supplies of firewood should be kept dry and accessible.

Have containers handy to store a sufficient supply of drinking water in case pipes freeze. Be prepared to fill a bathtub with water.

Have on hand sufficient supplies of canned or prepared foods, in case you cannot use your stove or microwave oven for an extended period of time. Your barbecue offers an alternative cooking source, but you are cautioned NOT to use it inside the house.

Personal Preparations:

Always dress appropriately for winter weather conditions. Protection of extremities (head, hands, feet) is vital. Several layers of clothing will trap warm air around your body more effectively than a single layer.

What You Should Do

If you are stranded in your automobile:

Stay calm. Do not leave your vehicle to seek other shelter unless appropriate shelter is very close, visible, and obviously inhabited.

Tie your distress flag to your aerial or outside door handle.

Stay in your vehicle until help arrives.

Take steps to stay warm. If clothing is wet, remove it and replace with dry items. Wrap yourself in a sleeping bag. If two or more people are in the vehicle, sit close together to share each other's body heat. If you are alone, huddle in the fetal position.

Running your car heater to keep warm should only be done as a last resort. If you must run the heater, run it intermittently on low until fuel runs out. **KEEP A WINDOW OPEN TO ALLOW FRESH AIR TO CIRCULATE.** Carbon monoxide poisoning and death could result if your vehicle is tightly shut. **AT THE FIRST SIGN OF DROWSINESS,** open all windows, breathe deeply, shut off the car, and use alternative methods to stay warm.

Exercise regularly, enough to stay warm and maintain circulation, but not enough to work up a sweat. Pay particular attention to hands and feet.

Stay with your vehicle until help arrives.

If you are travelling and see a vehicle in distress, and you are unsure of your ability to assist the occupants, notify the police at your first opportunity! Be prepared to give a description of the vehicle and its' location.

If you are at home:

Turn the radio on (station and frequency)

Our emergency radio is located:

Extra batteries are located:

Assemble all people and pets at the agreed upon meeting place in the home.
Stay calm and stay put.

If your regular heating source fails, put on additional layers of clothing and use your emergency heat source. Our emergency heat source is:

Close doors to unused rooms to conserve heat.

Flashlights/candles are located:

TORNADO

Preparing for a Tornado

A tornado is a column of rotating wind, travelling across the land at speeds of 30 to more than 100 kilometers per hour (20 to 65 m.p.h.).

Tornadoes can occur at any time. Most often they occur in the late afternoon, in late spring or early summer. They are most frequent during moderate summer temperatures, accompanied by relatively high humidity.

A **Tornado Watch** is issued if conditions exist for tornadoes to develop. No tornado has been sighted.

A **Tornado Warning** is issued only if a tornado has been sighted, or if radar detects a tornado-like disturbance.

In Case of a Tornado Warning

If you are in the open, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If none is available, be prepared to lie flat in a depression or ditch, and hang onto something on the ground, a culvert, large rock, shrub etc.

If you are in an automobile, get away from the vehicle, and seek the shelter described above. You are safer in a ditch than in your car.

If you are in a public facility (school, work, mall) go to an interior hallway on the lowest level. Avoid large rooms and stay away from windows. Determine who is in charge of the facility, and follow their instructions. Your calm, orderly behaviour will set an example for others, and help avert panic.

If you are in a home, head for the basement. Seek shelter under a staircase or sturdy furniture. If you have no basement, go to a bathroom or closet on the lowest floor, or seek shelter under sturdy furniture.

If you are in a mobile home, go immediately to a more substantial shelter.

In an apartment building or a commercial building, the safest locations are the stairwells and interior corridors.

TORNADO

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Turn on the radio (station and frequency)

Our emergency radio is located

Extra batteries are located

Assemble all people and pets at the agreed upon meeting place in the home.

When a tornado watch is issued, store or secure light items outside; garbage cans, bikes, boats, BBQ etc. On our property, this would include the following items:

When a tornado warning is issued, seek shelter. In our household, the safest location is:

Take the radio and batteries with you. Do not leave this safe shelter until the radio has issued the "all clear." Flashlight/candles are located

Special notes for our family:

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

FILL IN THE EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR
YOUR AREA:

POLICE _____

FIRE _____

AMBULANCE _____

POISON CONTROL _____

HYDRO EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE _____

WATER EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE _____

GAS EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE _____

HOSPITAL _____

FAMILY DOCTOR _____

ANIMAL CONTROL _____

NOTES: