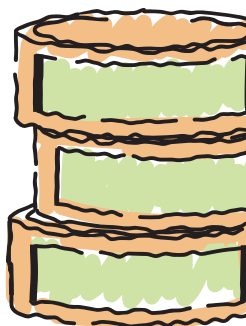


Your Guide to Disaster Preparedness



Disasters can occur in many forms: tornadoes, floods, fires, terrorist attacks and other emergency situations. Even a heat wave or winter storm can create a crisis. Take these steps to prepare yourself and your family in the event of a disaster.

Develop a Plan

Prepare a disaster kit. Based on the type of event, a disaster kit may contain different supplies. However, a basic kit should include the following:

- Batteries
- Flashlights
- Canned foods for three days and a can opener
- Bottled water (one gallon per day per person, with at least a three-day supply for each person)
- First aid supplies
- Battery-powered radio or television
- Blankets
- Matches



There are other supplies to consider:

- One change of clothing and footwear per person
- A tool kit that includes a hammer, pliers, wrench, pocket knife, fire extinguisher, signal flare and a whistle
- Baby items including formula, diapers and bottles
- Personal hygiene items including soap, toilet paper and feminine products



Compile a list of important phone numbers.

Share the list with family members and post it in a handy location at home (e.g., the refrigerator, by the phones). Here are some phone numbers you should have on hand during a crisis:

- Designated emergency contact person
- Family members' contact information (work, school, cell phone, etc.)
- Emergency responders (911, police and fire departments)
- Local hospital emergency department (see your local phone book)
- Local public health department (see your local phone book)
- Illinois Poison Center (1-800-222-1222)
- Your local chapter of the American Red Cross (check your local phone directory, or call 202-303-4498 or visit www.redcross.org to find the nearest chapter)



To prepare yourself and your family in the event that you cannot remain in your home or must evacuate the area around your home, take these steps:

Select an emergency contact.

Choose a family member or friend to be the central point of contact should a disaster occur. The person should agree to be the contact and should live far enough away that he/she likely would not be caught in the same event. Give each family member this person's contact information. Include phone numbers (work, home, pager and cell) and e-mail addresses.



Decide on a meeting place.

Pick a meeting place away from your home where your family members will gather in the event of an emergency situation. Make sure the meeting place is far enough away from your home that it would not be affected by the event. Be as precise as possible to avoid confusion. For example, "the front entrance of the church on the corner of Main Street and First Avenue." It is a good idea to actually meet there once as a drill, especially for families with children.



For more information on how you can prepare, check out these additional resources:

Illinois Department of Public Health
217-782-4977; www.idph.state.il.us

American Red Cross
202-303-4498; www.redcross.org

During a Crisis

- **Remain calm and wait for instructions.** Being calm in a crisis will help you to avoid injuries. Listen for and follow the advice of local officials.
- **Be able to locate family members.** Know where your family members are during a crisis and be able to contact them whether they are at work, school, home or elsewhere. If you cannot locate all family members, get in touch with your emergency contact who may have heard from them.
- **Call your contact.** Call your emergency contact as soon as possible if you cannot locate your family members.
- **Check on neighbors.** Make sure neighbors are safe or see if they need help, especially the elderly or disabled.
- **Know how to get information.** Be aware of the TV and radio stations that provide up-to-the-minute information on local disasters. Tune in for weather updates and evacuation procedures.

Prepare for a crisis situation,

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1-800-311-3435; www.cdc.gov