

Disaster Preparedness Checklist for Families

Being prepared for a disaster can help you stay safe and calm during an emergency. This checklist will guide your family on what to do before, during, and after a disaster. Make sure everyone in your family knows the plan!

1. Create a Family Emergency Plan

- Meeting Spots:
 - Choose two safe places to meet: one near your home and one outside your neighborhood.
- Emergency Contacts:
 - List important phone numbers (family, friends, doctors) and make sure everyone has a copy.
 - Choose an out-of-town contact for family members to call if local phone lines are down.
- Plan for Pets:
 - Decide who will care for pets during a disaster and where you can take them (not all shelters allow pets).
- Evacuation Routes:
 - Know the safest routes out of your neighborhood.
 - Practice the evacuation route with your family.

2. Build a Disaster Kit

Keep your kit in a backpack or small bag that's easy to carry. Check the items regularly to make sure they're still good to use.

What to Include:

- Water: 1 gallon per person per day (3-day supply)
- Food: Non-perishable items like canned goods, granola bars, and dried fruit (3-day supply)
- Clothing: Extra clothes, sturdy shoes, and a jacket
- First Aid Kit: Bandages, antiseptic, tweezers, and any needed medications
- Tools: Multi-tool or pocketknife, flashlight, and extra batteries
- Hygiene Items: Hand sanitizer, wet wipes, toothbrush, and toothpaste
- Blanket or Sleeping Bag: To stay warm
- Whistle: To signal for help
- Cash: Small bills in case ATMs don't work
- Phone Charger & Battery Pack: To stay connected
- Important Documents: Copies of IDs, insurance, medical records in a waterproof bag



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3. Prepare Your Home

- Know How to Shut Off Utilities:
 - Learn how to turn off your home's gas, water, and electricity in case of leaks or fires.
- Fire Extinguisher:
 - Make sure you have a working fire extinguisher and know how to use it.
- Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:
 - Check batteries regularly.
- Secure Heavy Items:
 - Anchor tall furniture and water heaters to the wall to prevent them from falling.
- Store Emergency Supplies:
 - Keep your disaster kit, extra blankets, and important documents in an easy-to-access place.

4. Stay Informed

- Sign Up for Alerts:
 - Register for local emergency alerts on your phone or by email.
- Monitor Weather Reports:
 - Pay attention to warnings about severe weather, floods, or other disasters.
- Know Your Risks:
 - Understand what types of disasters are common in your area (hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, etc.).
- Emergency Radio:
 - Have a battery-powered or hand-crank radio to receive updates if the power goes out.

5. Practice Your Plan

- Drills:
 - Practice evacuating your home and meeting at your chosen spots.
- Fire Drill:
 - Ensure everyone knows how to safely leave the house in case of a fire.
- Emergency Contacts:
 - Make sure everyone memorizes important phone numbers, especially young children.



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6. Special Considerations

- Children & Seniors:
 - Make sure kids and elderly family members understand the plan and know what to do.
 - Pack extra items like diapers, formula, or medications.
- Disabilities:
 - Have a plan for any family members with disabilities who may need help evacuating or extra supplies.

7. What to Do During a Disaster

- Stay Calm and follow your emergency plan.
- Listen to Authorities: Follow evacuation orders and get to safety quickly.
- Communicate: Let your out-of-town contact know you're safe.
- Follow Your Plan: Use your pre-planned evacuation routes and meeting spots.

8. After the Disaster

- Check for Injuries: Give first aid if needed.
- Stay Safe: Avoid downed power lines, unstable buildings, and flooded areas.
- Help Others: Assist neighbors or friends if they need help.
- Wait for Official Updates: Only return home when it's safe and authorities say so.

By following this checklist, your family will be better prepared for any disaster. Remember, it's not just about having supplies; it's about having a plan and practicing it!

