

# Family Disaster Planning

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## 1. Find out what could happen to you.

- Contact your local Red Cross Chapter before a disaster occurs – be prepared to take notes.
- Ask what types of disaster are most likely to happen.
- Learn your community's warning signals.
- Ask about animal care after a disaster.
- Find out how to help elderly or disabled person's if needed.
- Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, and your children's school or day care.

## 2. Create a disaster plan

- Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster.
- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen.
- Pick two places to meet:
  - (1) Right outside your home in case of sudden emergency, like fire.
  - (2) Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Ask an out-of-town friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.
- Take inventory of your property.

## 3. Complete this checklist:

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.)
- Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the utilities (water, gas and electricity) at the main switches.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home.
- Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster.

## 4. Stock emergency supplies

- Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit – find out how by checking the Red Cross web site. [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## 5. Practice and maintain your plan

- Quiz your kids every six months or so.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuations.
- Replace stored water and stored food every six months.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s).
- Test your smoke detectors monthly; change batteries at least once a year.

## IF DISASTER STRIKES

### Remain Calm and Patient

#### Put your plan into action

- Remain calm and patient
- Check for injuries
- Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- Listen to your battery-powered radio for news and instructions.

#### Check for damage in your home

- Use flashlights. Do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, get everyone outside quickly.

#### Remember to . . .

- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact, and do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially elderly or disabled persons.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is cut off.
- Stay away from downed power lines.