

Four Steps to Disaster Planning

1 Find Out What Disasters Could Happen To You

- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen in your area.

- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them. Also, learn which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.

- Ask about animal care after a disaster.

- Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.

- Find out about the disaster plan at your workplace, your children's school or childcare center and other places your family frequents.

2 Create A Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.

- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan to take care of your pets.

- Ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your “family contact.” It’s often easier to call long distance following a disaster. (See pg. 25)

- Pick two places to meet:

1. Right outside your home in case of fire.
2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can’t return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.

Address _____

Phone Number _____

3 Put Your Plan Into Action

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local emergency medical services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC type fire extinguisher in your home, teach each family member to use it, and show them where it is kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt (see page 8).
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a disaster supplies kit (see page 5).
- Take a first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room. (Complete escape diagram on page 9).
- Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.

4 Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Review your plans every six months so everyone remembers what to do.

Next review: _____

- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.

Date of last drill: _____

Date of next drill: _____

- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.

Date inspected: _____

Next inspection due: _____

- Test your smoke detectors monthly. Change the batteries every six months and clean the dust from the detector each time you change batteries.

Date of last battery change: _____

Next battery change due: _____

- Replace stored water and food every six months.

Date of last rotation: _____

Date of next rotation: _____

HINT: When you set your clocks in the fall and the spring, also replace your stored water and food, change your smoke detector batteries, and do other things necessary to maintain your plan.