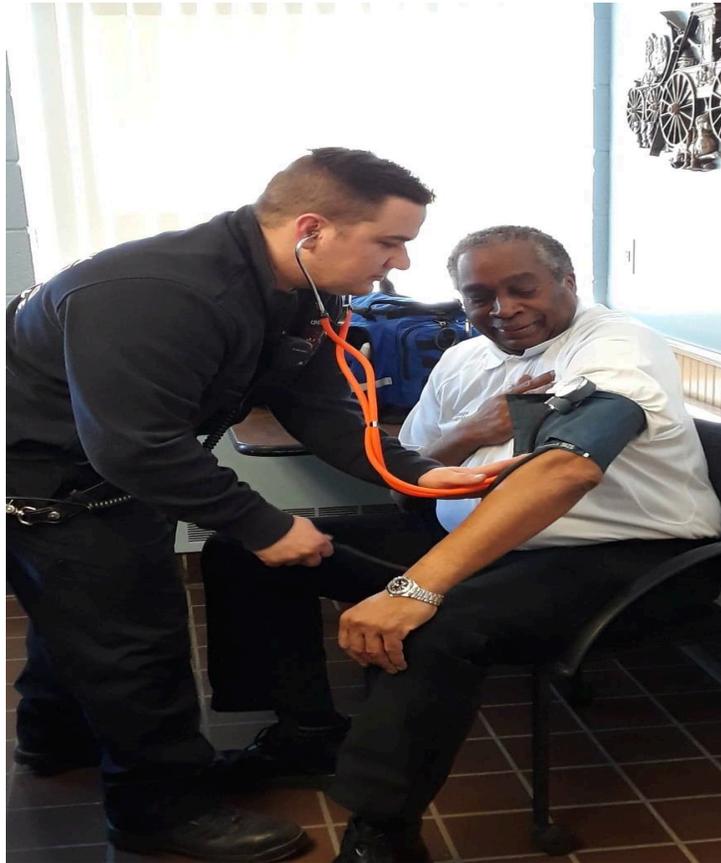




# Senior Citizens Safety Packet



*Your health and safety is our concern*



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# Smoke Alarms at Home



**SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART** of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

## SAFETY TIPS

- » Install smoke alarms inside and outside each bedroom and sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- » Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- » It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds they all sound.
- » Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- » There are two kinds of alarms. Ionization smoke alarms are quicker to warn about flaming fires. Photoelectric alarms are quicker to warn about smoldering fires. It is best to use both types of alarms in the home.
- » A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- » People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- » Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

## FACTS

- ! A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ! Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ! Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or the alarms are not working.



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# Smoke Alarms

Working smoke alarms save lives. However, people who are deaf or hard of hearing may not be able to depend on the traditional smoke alarm to alert them to a fire.



## for People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For added safety, interconnect all the smoke alarms. If one sounds, they all sound. This gives people more time to escape.

### SAFETY TIPS

- » Smoke alarms and alert devices are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- » Strobe lights flash when the smoke alarm sounds. The lights warn people of a possible fire.
- » When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker can wake them so they can escape. The shaker is activated by the sound of a smoke alarm.
- » When people who are hard of hearing are asleep, a loud, mixed, low-pitched sound alert device can wake them. They may find a pillow or bed shaker helpful. These devices are triggered by the sound of the smoke alarm.
- » Research the products and select the ones that best meet your needs.

### WHERE TO FIND EQUIPMENT

Search home improvement store websites or use a general search engine to look for strobe light smoke alarms. BRK / First Alert, Gentex, and Kidde brands offer this type of smoke alarm. Find smoke alarm accessories such as pillow shakers, transmitters, and receivers at [lifetonesafety.com](http://lifetonesafety.com), [safeawake.com](http://safeawake.com) and [silentcall.com](http://silentcall.com). Choose devices that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

### FACT

Home fire sprinklers keep fires small. This gives people more time to escape in a fire.

**AND DON'T FORGET...**  
Test all smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.



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# Carbon Monoxide Safety



Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

- » CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards. For the best protection, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- » Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- » Choose a CO alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- » Call your local fire department's non-emergency number to find out what number to call if the CO alarm sounds.
- » Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- » If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- » If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel.
- » If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- » During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- » A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- » Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.

## HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT



Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in. When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation. Never use your oven to heat your home.

## FACTS

- ! A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.
- ! In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.



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# Electric Portable Space Heater Safety

When the weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our homes. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations:

## HEATER CHECKLIST

- » Purchase a heater that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- » Keep the heater at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including people.
- » Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- » Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- » Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off if it tips over.
- » Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- » Keep children away from the space heater.
- » Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- » Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

## Types of electric space heaters

### Oil or water-filled radiator

Heated oil or water travels through the heater.

### Fan-forced heater

A fan blows warm air over metal coils.

### Ceramic heater

Air is warmed over a ceramic heating element.

### Infrared heaters

Heat is created by infrared bulbs.

## Fact

Nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters.



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# Electrical Safety

Flipping a light switch. Plugging in a coffeemaker. Charging a laptop computer. These are second nature for most of us. Electricity makes our lives easier. However, we need to be cautious and keep safety in mind.



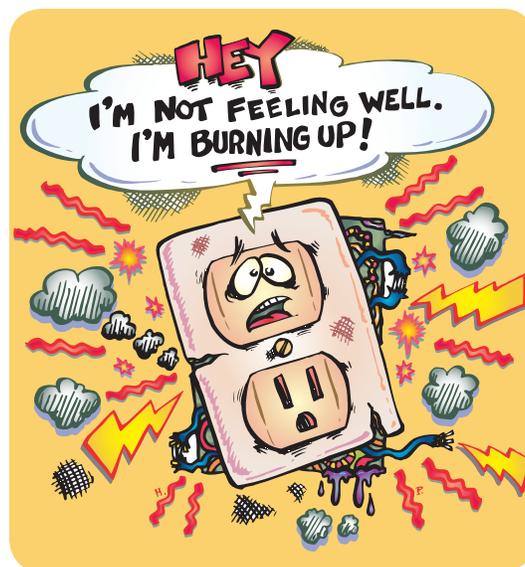
## SAFETY TIPS

- »» Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- »» When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified inspector.
- »» Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- »» Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.
- »» Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) shut off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home. Use a qualified electrician.
- »» Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.
- »» Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly.
- »» Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don't have to use extension cords.
- »» Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture. There should be a sticker that indicates the maximum wattage light bulb to use.

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

Call a qualified electrician or your landlord if you have:

- Frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
- A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
- Discolored or warm wall outlets
- A burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance
- Flickering or dimming lights
- Sparks from an outlet



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# CFL Light Bulb Safety

Energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL) are becoming more common in homes and at work. In addition to using less electricity, they also have a positive impact on the global climate. Here are some important safety tips you should know about CFLs.



PURCHASE CFL LIGHT BULBS that have the listing label of a recognized testing laboratory. Light bulbs labeled by a recognized testing lab will ensure that the bulb meets the latest product safety standards.

## When a CFL Burns Out

- »» When a CFL bulb burns out it may smoke and the plastic base may blacken. This is normal and is not a fire safety issue.
- »» CFLs should never be discarded with household trash. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends that consumers use local recycling options for CFLs. Contact your local government or visit [epa.gov/cfl/cflrecycling](http://epa.gov/cfl/cflrecycling) to identify local recycling options.

## If a CFL Breaks

CFLs are made of glass and can break. Be careful when removing from packaging and installing or removing from a socket. If a CFL breaks:

- OPEN a window to allow the room to air out for 5–10 minutes.
- People and pets should LEAVE the room.
- TURN OFF forced air heating and/or air conditioning.
- COLLECT broken glass and visible powder using stiff cardboard, tape or a damp paper towel.
- PLACE the debris in a glass jar or a plastic bag in a safe location outside until you can dispose of it.
- CONTACT your local government to find out how to dispose of the debris
- CONTINUE airing out the room for several hours.

## NOTE

Consider checking the Consumer Product Safety Commission ([cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov)) for recalls of CFLs that may present a fire danger.

## FACT

CFL bulbs contain a small trace of **mercury** within the glass. When broken, mercury will immediately dissipate into the air. Concentrations of mercury will likely approach zero in an hour or so.



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# Generator Safety

**Downed utility lines, power company blackouts, heavy snow falls or summer storms can all lead to power outages. Many people turn to a portable generator for a temporary solution without knowing the risks.**

- » Generators should be used in well ventilated locations outside away from all doors, windows and vent openings.
- » Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open.
- » Place generators so that exhaust fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors or other openings in the building.
- » Make sure to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting height.
- » Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.



- » Store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.

## Just Remember...

When plugging in appliances, make sure they are plugged directly into the generator or a heavy duty outdoor-rated extension cord. The cords should be checked for cuts, tears and that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin.

If you must connect the generator to the house wiring to power appliances, have a qualified electrician install a properly rated transfer switch in accordance with the National Electrical Code® (NEC) and all applicable state and local electrical codes.

## FACT

- ! CO deaths associated with generators have spiked in recent years as generator sales have risen.



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# Cooking Safety

Cooking brings family and friends together, provides an outlet for creativity and can be relaxing. But did you know that cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries? By following a few safety tips you can prevent these fires.

## “COOK WITH CAUTION”

- » Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- » Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- » If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- » Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

## If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire...

- » On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- » For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

## If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire...

- » Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- » Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from outside the home.



## Cooking and Kids

Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

## FACTS

- ! The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- ! Most cooking fires in the home involve the kitchen stove.



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# Scald Prevention

## Safety Tips

A scald injury can happen at any age. Children, older adults and people with disabilities are especially at risk. Hot liquids from bath water, hot coffee and even microwaved soup can cause devastating injuries. Scald burns are the second leading cause of all burn injuries.

### Scald Safety

- » Teach children that hot things can burn. Install anti-scald devices on tub faucets and shower heads.
- » Always supervise a child in or near a bathtub.
- » Test the water at the faucet. It should be less than 100° Fahrenheit (38° Celsius).
- » Before placing a child in the bath or getting in the bath yourself, test the water.
- » Test the water by moving your hand, wrist and forearm through the water. The water should feel warm, not hot, to the touch.
- » Place hot liquids and food in the center of a table or toward the back of a counter.
- » Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.
- » Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face.
- » Never hold a child while you are cooking, drinking a hot liquid, or carrying hot foods or liquids.
- » Never heat a baby bottle in a microwave oven. Heat baby bottles in warm water from the faucet.
- » Allow microwaved food to cool before eating.
- » Choose prepackaged soups whose containers have a wide base or, to avoid the possibility of a spill, pour the soup into a traditional bowl after heating.

### Burn Rx

Treat a burn right away. Cool the burn with cool water for 3–5 minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Get medical help if needed.

### FACT!

Prepackaged **microwavable soups** are a frequent cause of scald burn injuries (especially noodle soups) because they can easily tip over, pouring hot liquid (and noodles) on the person.



Greenhalgh DG, Bridges P, Coombs E, et al.  
Instant cup of soup: design flaws increase risk of burns.  
Journal of Burn Care and Research, July–August 2006; 27(4):476-81



**Your Source for SAFETY Information**

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# Smoking & Home Fire Safety



The place where we feel safest — at home — is where most smoking-materials structure fires, deaths, and injuries occur. Smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths. Smoking material fires are preventable.

## Smoking Safety

- » If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes.
- » If you smoke, smoke outside. Most deaths result from fires that started in living rooms, family rooms and dens or in bedrooms.
- » Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials up high out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.

## Put It Out

- » Use a deep, sturdy ashtray. Place it away from anything that can burn.
- » Do not discard cigarettes in vegetation such as mulch, potted plants or landscaping, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves or other things that could ignite easily.
- » Before you throw away butts and ashes, make sure they are out, and dousing in water or sand is the best way to do that.

## Smoking and Medical Oxygen

Never smoke and never allow anyone to smoke where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

## ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Fires have occurred while e-cigarettes were being used, the battery was being charged, or the device was being transported. Battery failures have led to small explosions. Never leave charging e-cigarettes unattended. E-cigarettes should be used with caution.

## FACTS

- ! The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age.
- ! One out of four fatal victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire.



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# Clothes Dryer Safety

Doing laundry is most likely part of your every day routine. But did you know how important taking care of your clothes dryer is to the safety of your home? With a few simple safety tips you can help prevent a clothes dryer fire.

- »» Have your dryer installed and serviced by a professional.
- »» Do not use the dryer without a lint filter.
- »» Make sure you clean the lint filter before or after each load of laundry. Remove lint that has collected around the drum.
- »» Rigid or flexible metal venting material should be used to sustain proper air flow and drying time.
- »» Make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the outdoor vent flap will open when the dryer is operating. Once a year, or more often if you notice that it is taking longer than normal for your clothes to dry, clean lint out of the vent pipe or have a dryer lint removal service do it for you.
- »» Keep dryers in good working order. Gas dryers should be inspected by a qualified professional to make sure that the gas line and connection are intact and free of leaks.
- »» Make sure the right plug and outlet are used and that the machine is connected properly.
- »» Follow the manufacturer's operating instructions and don't overload your dryer.
- »» Turn the dryer off if you leave home or when you go to bed.

## AND DON'T FORGET...

Dryers should be properly **grounded**.

Check the **outdoor vent** flap to make sure it is not covered by snow.

Keep the area around your dryer **clear** of things that can burn, like boxes, cleaning supplies and clothing, etc.

Clothes that have come in contact with **flammable substances**, like gasoline, paint thinner, or similar solvents should be laid outside to dry, then can be washed and dried as usual.

## FACT

- ❗ The leading cause of home clothes dryer fires is failure to clean them.



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# Microwave Oven Safety

With busy lives, families rely on the microwave oven as a quick way to heat up a meal, warm up a drink or defrost dinner. While the convenience of the microwave oven is something we take for granted, safety should not be. By following a few simple safety tips you can prevent painful burns and possible fires.

## SAFETY TIPS

- » PURCHASE a microwave oven that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Make sure to complete and return the product registration card. This way the manufacturer can reach you if there is a recall on the product.
- » PLUG the microwave oven directly into the wall outlet — never use an extension cord.
- » MAKE sure the microwave oven is at a safe height, within easy reach of all users.
- » OPEN food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam or the food itself can cause burns.
- » FOOD heats unevenly in microwave ovens. Stir and test before eating or giving to children.
- » NEVER heat a baby bottle in the microwave. Since a microwave oven heats unevenly, it can create hot pockets, leading to burns. Warm a bottle in a bowl of warm — not hot or boiling — water, or by running it under the tap.



## MICROWAVE USE

Always **supervise** children when they are using a microwave oven.

Use only **microwave-safe** food containers or dishes. Never use aluminum foil or metal in a microwave oven.

If you have a **fire** in the microwave, leave the door closed, turn the oven off and unplug it from the wall. If the fire does not go out, get outside and call the fire department.

## FACT

Scald burns are the leading cause of injury from microwave ovens.



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# Home Safety for People with Disabilities

There's no place like home. It is a place to relax, share laughs with family, and enjoy home cooked meals. But did you know that the majority of fire deaths occur in the home? Help everyone in the home stay safe from fire.



## Home Fire Sprinklers

Home fire sprinklers protect lives by keeping fires small. Sprinklers allows people more time to escape in a fire. When choosing an apartment or home, look for one that has home fire sprinklers.

## Smoke Alarms

- » Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.
- » Test your smoke alarm at least once a month by pushing the test button. If you can't reach the alarm, ask for help.
- » For added safety, interconnect the smoke alarms. If one sounds, they all sound. This gives more time to escape.
- » Smoke alarms with sealed (long-life) batteries work for up to 10 years. They can be helpful for people who find it hard to change batteries.
- » Smoke alarms expire. Replace them every 10 years.

## People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- » Smoke alarms and alert devices are available for people who are deaf or hard or hearing.
- » Strobe lights flash when the smoke alarm sounds. The lights warn people of a possible fire.
- » When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker can wake them so they can escape.
- » When people who are hard of hearing are asleep, a loud, mixed, low-pitched sound alert device can wake them. A pillow or bed shaker may be helpful. These devices are triggered by the sound of the smoke alarm.



## Escape Planning

**Include everyone** in home escape planning. Each person should have input about the best ways to escape. Home fire drills are important. Everyone in the home must participate in them. Keep a phone by your bed in case you can't escape and need to call for help.

**Talk with someone from the fire department** about your escape plan. Ask them **review your plan**. Ask if your fire department keeps a directory of people who may need extra help. If you have a **service animal**, agree on a plan to keep the animal with you during an emergency.



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# Hoarding and Fire: Reducing the Risk

Do you have a person in your life who may be a hoarder? Hoarding is a condition where a person has persistent difficulty discarding personal possessions. The large amount of possessions fill the home and prevent the normal use of the space. Living space becomes cluttered. It may be unusable. Hoarding brings distress and emotional health concerns.

## WHY HOARDING INCREASES FIRE RISKS

- Cooking is unsafe if flammable items are close to the stove or oven.
- Heating units may be too close to things that can burn. They might also be placed on unstable surfaces. If a heater tips over into a pile, it can cause a fire.
- Electrical wiring may be old or worn from the weight of piles. Pests could chew on wires. Damaged wires can start fires.
- Open flames from smoking materials or candles in a home with excess clutter are very dangerous.
- Blocked pathways and exits may hinder escape from a fire.

## HOW HOARDING IMPACTS FIRST RESPONDERS

- Hoarding puts first responders in harm's way.
- Firefighters cannot move swiftly through a home filled with clutter.
- Responders can be trapped in a home when exits are blocked. They can be injured by objects falling from piles.
- The weight of the stored items, especially if water is added to put out a fire, can lead to building collapse.
- Fighting fires is very risky in a hoarding home. It is hard to enter the home to provide medical care. The clutter impedes the search and rescue of people and pets.

## How Can You Help Reduce the Risk of Fire Injury

- ✓ When talking a person who hoards, focus on safety rather than the clutter. Be empathetic. Match the person's language. If they call it hoarding, then you can call it hoarding.
- ✓ Help the residents make a home safety and escape plan. Stress the importance of clear pathways and exits. Practice the plan often. Exit routes may change as new items are brought into the home.
- ✓ Install working smoke alarms in the home. Test them at least once a month.
- ✓ Reach out to community resources. Talk to members of the fire department to alert them of your concerns. They may be able to connect you with members of a hoarding task force for additional help.

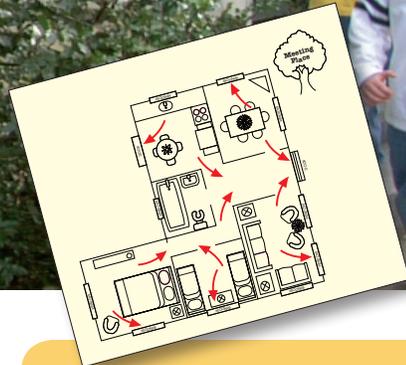


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# Escape Planning

Plan Ahead! If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.



## SAFETY TIPS

- » MAKE a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » KNOW at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » HAVE an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » PRACTICE your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » PRACTICE using different ways out.
- » TEACH children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » CLOSE doors behind you as you leave.

## IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...

- » If the smoke alarm sounds, GET OUT AND STAY OUT. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, GET LOW AND GO under the smoke to your way out.
- » CALL the fire department from outside your home.

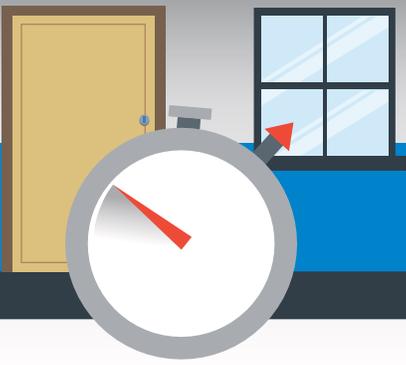
## FACTS

- ! A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ! According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ! While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ! **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



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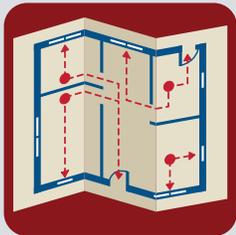
# Every Second Counts: Plan 2 Ways Out!™

Fire Prevention Week | Oct. 8-14, 2017

How fast does fire move? Very fast. You could have less than 2 minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds.

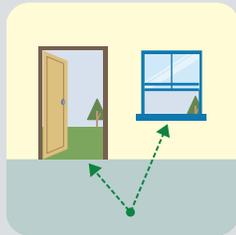
## 7 steps to practicing your escape plan

1



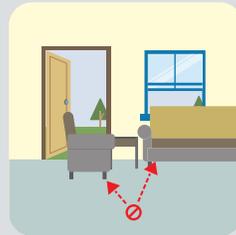
Draw a map of your home. Include all doors and windows.

2



Find two ways out of every room.

3



Make sure doors and windows are not blocked.

4



Choose an outside meeting place in front of your home.

5



Push the test button to sound the smoke alarm.

6



Practice your drill with everyone in the home.

7



Get outside to your meeting place.

For more information about escape planning, visit:  
[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov) and [www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org).



The Official Sponsor of Fire Prevention Week Since 1922



**PLAN  
2 WAYS  
OUT OF  
EVERY  
ROOM**



# Fire Alarms in Apartment Buildings

Large apartment buildings are built to keep people safe from fire. Fire alarm systems detect smoke and fire. They will warn residents of danger.

- » The fire alarm system has many parts that work together. Some of the parts are out of sight. In a fire, smoke detectors sense smoke and activate the fire alarm. Manual fire alarm boxes allow people to sound the alarm. When the fire alarm system activates it will warn residents of danger.
- » Everyone in the building should know where to find the manual fire alarm boxes (alarm boxes on the wall with a pull bar). Most are found within five feet of an exit door.
- » If there is a fire, pull the manual fire alarm box handle on your way out of the building.
- » When the system senses smoke or fire, a loud horn or tone will sound. Everyone must know what this sound means and how to react.
- » Leave the building right away if you hear the sound of a fire alarm. Stay outside at your meeting place until you are told the building is safe.
- » Treat every fire alarm as an emergency. When the alarms sounds, get outside.
- » Only use a manual fire alarm box if there is smoke or fire. Frequent false alarms are a problem. People might ignore the sound if they hear too many false alarms. False alarms also put firefighters at risk.

## Escape 101

Know the locations of all exit stairs from your floor. If the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke, you may have to use another exit.



If the fire alarm sounds feel the door before opening. If it is hot, use another way out. If it is cool, use this exit to leave.

Close all doors behind you as you leave. Take the key to your apartment in case you are not able to get out of the building.

If fire or smoke is blocking all exits, return or stay in your apartment. Keep the door closed. Cover cracks around the door with towels or tape. Call **9-1-1** and let the fire department know you are trapped. Signal from the window by waving a flashlight or light-colored cloth.

**Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features and plans in your building.**



**Your Source for SAFETY Information**

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

# High-rise Apartment & Condominium Safety

People living in a high-rise apartment or condominium building need to think ahead and be prepared in the event of a fire. It is important to know the fire safety features in your building and work together with neighbors to help keep the building as fire-safe as possible.

## BE PREPARED!

- »»» For the best protection, select a fully sprinklered building. If your building is not sprinklered, ask the landlord or management to consider installing a sprinkler system.
- »»» Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features in your building (fire alarms, sprinklers, voice communication procedures, evacuation plans and how to respond to an alarm).
- »»» Know the locations of all available exit stairs from your floor in case the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke.
- »»» Make sure all exit and stairwell doors are clearly marked, not locked or blocked by security bars and clear of clutter.
- »»» If there is a fire, pull the fire alarm on your way out to notify the fire department and your neighbors.
- »»» If the fire alarm sounds, feel the door before opening and close all doors behind you as you leave. If it is hot, use another way out. If it is cool, leave by the nearest way out.
- »»» If an announcement is made throughout the building, listen carefully and follow directions.
- »»» Use the stairs to get out — never use the elevator unless you are directed to by the fire department.

## ESCAPE 101

**GO** to your outside meeting place and stay there. Call the fire department. If someone is trapped in the building, notify the fire department.

If you can't get out of your apartment because of fire, smoke or a disability, **STUFF** wet towels or sheets around the door and vents to keep smoke out.

**CALL** the fire department and tell them where you are.

**OPEN** a window slightly and wave a bright cloth to signal your location. Be prepared to close the window if it makes the smoke condition worse.

Fire department evacuation of a high-rise building can take a long time. Communicate with the fire department to monitor evacuation status.

## FACT

- ❗ High-rise buildings are more likely to have sprinklers and fire alarm equipment than other non-high-rise buildings.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

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# Fire Safety in Manufactured Homes

If buying or renting a manufactured home is in your future, make sure you keep fire safety in mind. By following a few tips and knowing the facts and the safety requirements for manufactured homes, you can help keep your family safe.

## SAFETY TIPS

- » CHOOSE a home built after 1976 that has the HUD label certifying that it meets certain minimum safety standards.
- » Be sure your home has enough smoke alarms. You need a smoke alarm inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area and in or near the family/live room area(s). For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound.
- » TEST smoke alarms at least once a month.
- » HAVE a home fire escape plan that includes two ways out of every room and an outside meeting place. Make sure all ways out of the home are easy to use. Practice your fire drill at least twice a year.
- » If smoke alarms sound when you are cooking, consider moving the alarm further from the kitchen area or install a photoelectric type alarm which is less sensitive to cooking.
- » NEVER remove or disable a smoke alarm.
- » CONSIDER having a licensed electrician inspect the electrical system to be sure it is safe and meets the applicable National Electrical Code® requirements.
- » Always stay in the kitchen when frying on the stovetop.
- » Have smokers smoke outside the home. Provide large, non-tip ashtrays and empty them frequently. Douse butts with water before throwing away.

## FACT

Smoke alarms are missing in half of all manufactured home fires. Since they are required to be sold with smoke alarms, this may mean people are removing them.

## HEAT SENSE

Keep space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Buy space heaters with automatic shut-off switches. Turn off portable space heaters before falling asleep or when leaving a room.

Never leave a lit candle unattended. Blow out candles when you leave the room or go to sleep.

Keep gasoline, charcoal lighter and other flammable liquids locked in an outdoor shed. Never store items under the home. Store firewood away from the home.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169



# Hotel & Motel Safety

Vacations and business travel make hotels and motels our home away from home. It is just as important to be prepared and know what you would do in a hotel/motel emergency as it is in your own home.

## BE SAFE WHEN TRAVELING!

- Choose a hotel/motel that is protected by both smoke alarms and a fire sprinkler system.
- When you check in, ask the front desk what the fire alarm sounds like.
- When you enter your room, review the escape plan posted in your room.
- Take the time to find the exits and count the number of doors between your room and the exit. Make sure the exits are unlocked. If they are locked, report it to management right away.
- Keep your room key by your bed and take it with you if there is a fire.
- If the alarm sounds, leave right away, closing all doors behind you. Use the stairs — never use elevators during a fire.
- If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.

## *If You Can't Escape...*

**SHUT** off fans and air conditioners.

**STUFF** wet towels in the crack around the doors.

**CALL** the fire department and let them know your location.

**WAIT** at the window and signal with a flashlight or light colored cloth.

## FACTS

- ❗ On average, one of every **13 hotels** or motels reported a structure fire each year.
- ❗ The majority of hotel fire deaths result from fires that started in the **bedroom**.
- ❗ **Cooking equipment** is the leading cause of hotel/motel fires.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

# Medical Oxygen Safety

Portable medical oxygen in the home has grown over the past decade. Medical oxygen adds a higher percentage of oxygen to the air a patient uses to breathe. Fire needs oxygen to burn. If a fire should start in an oxygen-enriched area, the material burning will burn more quickly.

Homes where medical oxygen is used need specific fire safety rules to keep people safe from fire and burns.

## SAFETY TIPS

- » There is no safe way to smoke in the home when oxygen is in use. A patient on oxygen should not smoke.
- » Candles, matches, wood stoves and even sparking toys, can be ignition sources and should not be used in the home.
- » Keep oxygen cylinders at least five feet from a heat source, open flames or electrical devices.
- » Body oil, hand lotion and items containing oil and grease can easily ignite. Keep oil and grease away where oxygen is in use.
- » Never use aerosol sprays containing combustible materials near the oxygen.

## FACTS

- ! Oxygen saturates fabric covered furniture, clothing, hair and bedding, making it easier for a fire to start and spread.
- ! Smoking materials is the leading heat source resulting in medical oxygen related fires, injuries and deaths.



Post **No Smoking** and **No Open Flames** signs in and outside the home to remind people not to smoke.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169



Pets give us comfort, friendship, and unconditional love. Our connection to them can be among the strongest relationships in our lives. But pets can cause fires. We need to be careful with pets in the home.

### SAFETY TIPS

- » Pets are curious. They may bump into, turn on, or knock over cooking equipment. Keep pets away from stoves and countertops.
- » Keep pets away from candles, lamps, and space heaters.
- » Always use a metal or heat-tempered glass screen on a fireplace and keep it in place.
- » Keep pets away from a chimney's outside vents. Have a "pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from the fireplace. Glass doors and screens can stay dangerously hot for several hours after the fire goes out.
- » Consider battery-operated, flameless candles. They can look and smell like real candles.
- » Some pets are chewers. Watch pets to make sure they don't chew through electrical cords. Have any problems checked by a professional.

### SMOKE ALARMS

- » Have working smoke alarms on every level of the home. Test your smoke alarms at least once a month.
- » If the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out.
- » Never go back inside for pets in a fire. Tell firefighters if your pet is trapped.

## Pets and Wildfires

Make sure pets are included in your family's wildfire evacuation plan. Build an evacuation kit for each pet in your household. Ensure each kit is a size and weight that can be quickly and easily loaded into a vehicle when packing to evacuate.



### FACT

Pets and wild animals have a part in starting about 700 home fires per year. Roughly three-quarters of these fires were started by cooking equipment, fireplaces or chimneys, lighting, or candles.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

# 3 Be Informed

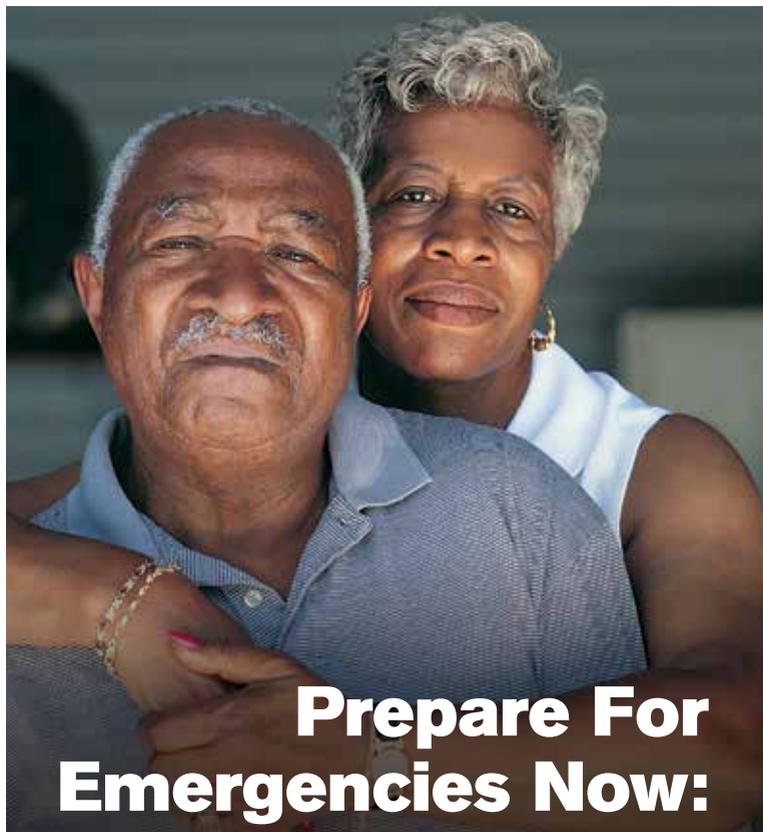
Some Of The Things You Can Do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit and making an emergency plan are the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region. For more information about specific types of emergencies, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or call 1-800-BE-READY.

Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.

## Prepare For Emergencies Now. Information For Older Americans.

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

This information was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in consultation with AARP, the American Red Cross and the National Organization on Disability.



## Prepare For Emergencies Now: Information For Older Americans.



# FEMA

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)



## Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans. Get Ready Now.

The likelihood that you and your family will recover from an emergency tomorrow often depends on the planning and preparation done today. While each person's abilities and needs are unique, every individual can take steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies from fires and floods to potential terrorist attacks. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan that fits those needs, you and your loved ones can be better prepared.

This guide outlines commonsense measures older Americans can take to start preparing for emergencies before they happen.

Preparing makes sense for older Americans.

**Get Ready Now.**



# 1 Get a Kit Of Emergency Supplies

The first step is to consider how an emergency might affect your individual needs. Plan to make it on your own, for at least three days. It's possible that you will not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore. It is crucial that you and your family think about what kinds of resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if those resources are limited or not available.

**Basic Supplies:** Think first about the basics for survival – food, water, clean air and any life-sustaining items you require. Consider two kits. In one kit put everything you will need to stay where you are and make it on your own for a period of time. The other kit should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to leave your home. Recommended basic emergency supplies include:

- ▶ Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- ▶ Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food and a can opener if kit contains canned food
- ▶ Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- ▶ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ▶ First aid kit
- ▶ Whistle to signal for help
- ▶ Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- ▶ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ▶ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ▶ Local maps
- ▶ Pet food, extra water and supplies for your pet or service animal

**Include Medications and Medical Supplies:**

If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week. You should also keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information. If it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medicines and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you should do to prepare.

If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers within your area and the areas you might evacuate to. If you use medical equipment in your home that requires electricity to operate, talk to your health care provider about what you can do to prepare for its use during a power outage.

**Additional Items:** In addition, there may be other things specific to your personal needs that you should also have on hand. If you use eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries, and oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your home. Also have copies of your medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards readily available.

**Include Emergency Documents:** Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, wills, power of attorney documents, deeds, social security numbers, credit card and bank information, and tax records. It is best to keep these documents in a waterproof container. Include the names and numbers of everyone in your personal support network, as well as your medical providers. Also be sure you have cash or travelers checks in your kits in case you need to purchase supplies.

## 2 Make a Plan

### For What You Will Do in an Emergency

The reality of a disaster situation is that you will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, think through the details of your everyday life. If there are people who assist you on a daily basis, list who they are, and how you will contact them in an emergency. Create your own personal support network by identifying others who will help you in an emergency. Think about what modes of transportation you use and what alternative modes could serve as back-ups. If you require handicap accessible transportation be sure your alternatives are also accessible. For every aspect of your daily routine, plan an alternative procedure. Make a plan and write it down. Keep a copy of your plan in your emergency supply kits and a list of important information and contacts in your wallet. Share your plan with your family, friends, care providers and others in your personal support network.

**Create a Personal Support Network:** If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster, make a list of family, friends and others who will be part of your plan. Talk to these people and ask them to be part of your support network. Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary. Make sure everyone knows how you plan to evacuate your home or workplace and where you will go in case of a disaster. Make sure that someone in your personal support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies. Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your personal support network.

**Develop a Family Communications Plan:** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact, not in the impacted area, may be in a better position to communicate among

separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient. For more information on how to develop a family communications plan visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

**Deciding to Stay or Go:** Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay or go. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use commonsense and available information to determine if there is immediate danger. In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor television or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available. If you're specifically told to evacuate or seek medical treatment, do so immediately. If you require additional travel time or need transportation assistance, make these arrangements in advance.

**Consider Your Pets:** Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you will need to make plans in advance for your pets and service animals. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that only service animals may be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets; consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area, pet-friendly shelters and veterinarians who would be willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency. For more information about pet preparedness, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

**Staying Put:** Whether you are at home or elsewhere, there may be situations when it's simply best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside. Consider what you can do to safely shelter-in-place alone or with friends, family or neighbors. Also consider how a shelter designated for the public would meet your needs.

There could be times when you will need to stay put and create a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside. This process is known as

“sealing the room.” Use available information to assess the situation. If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to take this kind of action. For more information about “sealing the room,” visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

**Evacuation:** There may be conditions in which you will decide to get away, or there may be situations when you may be ordered to leave. Plan how you will get away and anticipate where you will go. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency. Ask about evacuation plans at the places where you spend time including work, community organizations and other places you frequent. If you typically rely on elevators, have a back-up plan in case they are not working.

**Fire Safety:** Plan two ways out of every room in case of fire. Check for items such as bookcases, hanging pictures, or overhead lights that could fall and block an escape path. Check hallways, stairwells, doorways, windows and other areas for hazards that may keep you from safely leaving a building during an emergency. Secure or remove furniture and objects that may block your path. If there are aspects of preparing your home or workplace that you are not able to do yourself, enlist the help of your personal support network.

**Contact Your Local Emergency Information Management Office:** Some local emergency management offices maintain registers of older people so they can be located and assisted quickly in a disaster. Contact your local emergency management agency to see if these services exist where you live or visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to find links to government offices in your area.



## 1. Get a Kit of emergency supplies.

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for **at least three days**, maybe longer. While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food and clean air.

### Recommended Supplies to Include in a Basic Kit:

- ✓ **Water** one gallon per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- ✓ **Non-perishable Food** at least a three-day supply
- ✓ Battery-powered or hand crank **radio** and a **NOAA Weather Radio** with tone alert and **extra batteries** for both
- ✓ **Flashlight** and **extra batteries**
- ✓ **First Aid kit**
- ✓ **Whistle** to signal for help
- ✓ **Filter mask** or cotton t-shirt, to help filter the air
- ✓ **Moist towelettes, garbage bags** and **plastic ties** for personal sanitation
- ✓ **Wrench** or **pliers** to turn off utilities
- ✓ **Manual can opener** if kit contains canned food
- ✓ **Plastic sheeting** and **duct tape** to shelter-in-place
- ✓ **Important Family Documents**
- ✓ **Items for unique family needs**, such as daily prescription medications, infant formula or diapers



**Consider two kits.** In one, put everything you will need to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

## 2. Make a Plan for what you will do in an emergency.

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency. Be prepared to assess the situation. Use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and your loved ones.

**Develop a Family Emergency Plan.** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. **Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency.** It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an **out-of-town contact** may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. Be sure each person knows the phone number and has coins or a prepaid phone card to call the emergency contact. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use common sense and the information you are learning here to determine if there is immediate danger. **Watch television and listen to the radio for official instructions as they become available.**

**Create a Plan to Shelter-in-Place.** There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as sheltering-in-place and sealing the room can be a matter of survival. **If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to shelter-in-place and seal the room. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents.** Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits. Use all available information to assess the situation. Quickly bring your family and pets inside, lock doors, and close windows, air vents and replace dampers. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Understand that sealing the room is a temporary measure to create a barrier between you and contaminated air. Watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet for instructions from local emergency management officials.

**Create a Plan to Get Away.** Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. **Choose several destinations in different directions** so you have options in an emergency. If you have a car, keep at least a half tank of gas in it at all times. **Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation** out of your area. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. **Take your emergency supply kit**, unless you have reason to believe it is contaminated and lock the door behind you. Take pets with you if you are told to evacuate, however, if you are going to a public shelter, keep in mind they may not be allowed inside. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with your windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off. Listen to the radio for instructions. Know Emergency Plans at school and work. **Talk to your children's schools and your employer about emergency plans.** Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. If you are an employer, be sure you have an emergency preparedness plan. Review and practice it with your employees. A community working together during an emergency also makes sense. **Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.**

## 3. Be Informed about what might happen.

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family emergency plan, are the same for both a natural or manmade emergency. However there are significant differences among potential terrorist threats, such as biological, chemical, explosive, nuclear and radiological, which will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. By beginning a process of learning about these specific threats, you are **preparing yourself** to react in an emergency. Go to **ready.gov** to learn more about potential terrorist threats and other emergencies or call **1-800-BE-READY** (1-800-237-3239) for a free brochure. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. Also learn about your community's local emergency plan. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.

## 4. Get Involved in preparing your community.

After preparing yourself and your family for possible emergencies, take the next step and get involved in preparing your community. Learn more about **Citizen Corps**, which actively involves citizens in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger and better prepared. We all have a role to play in keeping our hometowns secure from emergencies of all kinds. Citizen Corps works hard to help people prepare, train and volunteer in their communities. Go to **www.citizencorps.gov** for more information and to get involved.



## Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children



# Ready

Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed.®



# Emergency Supply List



# FEMA

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)



## Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

**Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation**

**Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food**

**Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both**

**Flashlight and extra batteries**

**First aid kit**

**Whistle to signal for help**

**Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place**

**Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation**

**Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities**

**Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)**

**Local maps**

Through its *Ready Campaign*, the Federal Emergency Management Agency educates and empowers Americans to take some simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks. *Ready* asks individuals to do three key things: get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different types of agencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.

All Americans should have some basic supplies on hand in order to survive for at least three days if an emergency occurs. Following is a listing of some basic items that every emergency supply kit should include. However, it is important that individuals review this list and consider where they live and the unique needs of their family in order to create an emergency supply kit that will meet these needs. Individuals should also consider having at least two emergency supply kits, one full kit at home and smaller portable kits in their workplace, vehicle or other places they spend time.

Ready 



**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
Washington, DC 20472

## 1. Get a Kit of emergency supplies.

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for **at least three days**, maybe longer. While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food and clean air.

### Recommended Supplies to Include in a Basic Kit:

- ✓ **Water:** one gallon per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- ✓ **Non-perishable food:** at least a three-day supply
- ✓ Battery-powered or hand crank **radio** and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- ✓ **Flashlight** and **extra batteries**
- ✓ **First aid kit**
- ✓ **Whistle** to signal for help
- ✓ **Filter mask** or cotton t-shirt, to help filter the air
- ✓ **Moist towelettes, garbage bags** and **plastic ties** for personal sanitation
- ✓ **Wrench** or **pliers** to turn off utilities
- ✓ **Manual can opener** if kit contains canned food
- ✓ **Plastic Sheeting** and **duct tape** to shelter-in-place
- ✓ **Important family documents**
- ✓ **Items for unique family needs,** such as daily prescription medications, infant formula, diapers or pet food



**Include Medications and Medical Supplies:** If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need on hand to make it on your own for at least a week and keep a copy of your prescriptions as well as dosage or treatment information. If it is not possible to have a week-long supply of medicines and supplies, keep as much as possible on hand and talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you should do to prepare. If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital, or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers within your area and other areas you might evacuate to.

**Include Emergency Documents:** Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, medical records, wills, deeds, social security number, charge and bank accounts information, and tax records. It is best to keep these documents in a waterproof container. If there is any information related to operating equipment or life-saving devices that you rely on, include those in your emergency kit as well. If you have a communication disability, make sure your emergency information list notes the best way to communicate with you. Also be sure you have cash or travelers checks in your kits in case you need to purchase supplies.

**Additional Items:** If you use eyeglass, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries or oxygen, be sure you always have extras in your kit. Also have copies of your medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards readily available. If you have a service animal, be sure to include food, water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other emergency pet supplies.

**Consider two kits.** In one, put everything you will need to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

## 2. Make a Plan for what you will do in an emergency.

The reality of a disaster situation is that you will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, think through the details of your everyday life.

**Develop a Family Emergency Plan.** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. **Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency.** It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an **out-of-town contact** may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. **Watch television and listen to the radio for official instructions as they become available.**

**Create a Personal Support Network:** If you anticipate needing assistance during a disaster, **ask family, friends and others to be part of your plan.** Share each aspect of your emergency plan with everyone in your group, including a friend or relative in another area who would not be impacted by the same emergency who can help if necessary. Include the names and numbers of everyone in your personal support network, as well as your medical providers in your emergency supply kit. Make sure that someone in your personal support network has an extra key to your home and knows where you keep your emergency supplies. If you use a wheelchair or other medical equipment, show friends how to use these devices so they can move you if necessary and teach them how to use any lifesaving equipment or administer medicine in case of an emergency. Practice your plan with those who have agreed to be part of your personal support network.

Inform your employer and co-workers about your disability and let them know specifically what assistance you will need in an emergency. Talk about communication difficulties, physical limitations, equipment instructions and medication procedures. Always participate in trainings and emergency drills offered by your employer.

**Create a Plan to Shelter-in-Place:** There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as sheltering-in-place and sealing the room can be a matter of survival. **If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to shelter-in-place and seal the room. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents.** Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Understand that sealing the room is a temporary measure to create a barrier between you and contaminated air. **Listen to the radio** for instructions from local emergency management officials.

**Create a Plan to Get Away:** Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. **Choose several destinations in different directions** so you have options in an emergency. **Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation** out of your area. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. If you typically rely on elevators, have a back-up plan in case they are not working. **Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.**

**Consider Your Service Animal or Pets:** Whether you decide to stay put or evacuate, you will need to make plans in advance for your service animal and pets. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, make sure that they allow pets. Some only allow service animals.

**Fire Safety:** Plan two ways out of every room in case of fire. Check for items such as bookcases, hanging pictures or overhead lights that could fall and block an escape path.

**Contact Your Local Emergency Information Management Office:** Some local emergency management offices maintain registers of people with disabilities and other special needs so you can be located and assisted quickly in a disaster. Contact your local emergency management agency to see if these services exist where you live. In addition, wearing medical alert tags or bracelets that identify your special needs can be a crucial aid in an emergency situation.

## 3. Be Informed about what might happen.

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit and making an emergency plan are the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act.

## 1. Get a Kit of pet emergency supplies.

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about the basics for survival, particularly food and water.

- ✓ **Food:** Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container.
- ✓ **Water:** Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets, in addition to water you need for yourself and your family.
- ✓ **Medicines and medical records:** Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- ✓ **First aid kit:** Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors; antibiotic ointment; flea and tick prevention; latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first aid reference book.
- ✓ **Collar with ID tag, harness or leash:** Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times. Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit.
- ✓ **Important documents:** Place copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and also add them to your kit.
- ✓ **Crate or other pet carrier:** If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pets and animals with you, provided that it is practical to do so.
- ✓ **Sanitation:** Include pet litter and litter box if appropriate, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water. Use 8 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water, stir well and let it stand for 30 minutes before use. Do not use scented or color safe bleaches or those with added cleaners.
- ✓ **A picture of you and your pet together:** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.
- ✓ **Familiar items:** Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.

**Consider two kits.** In one, put everything your pets will need to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you and your pets have to get away.

## 2. Make a Plan for what you will do in an emergency.

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency. Be prepared to assess the situation. Use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and ensure your pet's safety during an emergency.



# Preparing Your Pets for Emergencies Makes Sense. Get Ready Now.

**Evacuate.** Plan how you will assemble your pets and anticipate where you will go. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if practical. If you go to a public shelter, keep in mind your pets may not be allowed inside. Secure appropriate lodging in advance depending on the number and type of animals in your care. Consider family or friends outside your immediate area who would be willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency. Other options may include: a hotel or motel that takes pets or some sort of boarding facility, such as a kennel or veterinary hospital that is near an evacuation facility or your family's meeting place. Find out before an emergency happens if any of these facilities in your area might be viable options for you and your pets.

**Develop a buddy system.** Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Talk with your pet care buddy about your evacuation plans and show them where you keep your pet's emergency supply kit. Also designate specific locations, one in your immediate neighborhood and other farther away, where you will meet in an emergency.

**Talk to your pet's veterinarian about emergency planning.** Discuss the types of things you should include in your pet's emergency first aid kit. Get the names of vets or veterinary hospitals in other cities where you might need to seek temporary shelter. Also talk with your veterinarian about microchipping. If you and your pet are separated, this permanent implant for your pet and corresponding enrollment in a recovery database can help a veterinarian or shelter identify your animal. If your pet is microchipped, keeping your emergency contact information up to date and listed with a reliable recovery database is essential to you and your pet being reunited.

**Gather contact information for emergency animal treatment.** Make a list of contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies including the Humane Society or ASPCA and emergency veterinary hospitals. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you, and one in your pet's emergency supply kit. Obtain "Pets Inside" stickers and place them on your doors or windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency. And, if time permits, remember to write the words "Evacuated with Pets" across the stickers, should you evacuate your home with your pets.

## 3. Be Prepared for what might happen.

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit for yourself, your family and your pets, is the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to say informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region.

Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected. Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

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For more information, visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) or call 1-800-BE-READY



## Family Disaster Plan

Family Last Name(s) or Household Address:

Date:

Family Member/Household Contact Info (If needed, additional space is provided in #10 below):

Name

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Email:

**Pet(s) Info:**

Name:

Type:

Color:

Registration #:

### Plan of Action

1. The disasters most likely to affect our household are:

2. What are the escape routes from our home?

3. If separated during an emergency, what is our meeting place near our home?



9. Family Member Responsibilities in the Event of a Disaster

Task	Description	Family Member Responsible
Disaster Kit*	Stock the disaster kit and take it if evacuation is necessary. Include items you might want to take to an evacuation shelter. Remember to include medications and eye glasses.	
Be informed	Maintain access to NOAA or local radio, TV, email or text alerts for important and current information about disasters.	
Family Medical Information	Make sure the household medical information is taken with us if evacuation is necessary.	
Financial Information	Obtain copies of bank statements and cash in the event ATMs and credit cards do not work due to power outages. Bring copies of utility bills as proof of residence in applying for assistance.	
Pet Information	Evacuate our pet(s), keep a phone list of pet-friendly motels and animal shelters, and assemble and take the pet disaster kit.	
Sharing and Maintaining the Plan	Share the completed plan with those who need to know. Meet with household members every 6 months or as needs change to update household plan.	

\*What supplies and records should go in your disaster kit? Visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

10. Other information, if not able to be included above.

*Congratulations on completing your family disaster plan! Please tell others: "We've made a family disaster plan and you can, too, with help from the American Red Cross."*

Get the facts about what you should do if an emergency or disaster occurs at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## Plan familiar para casos de desastre

Apellido(s) de la familia o dirección de la casa:

Fecha:

Datos de contacto para cada persona de la familia (para espacio adicional, ir al punto 10):

Nombre

Teléfono de la casa

Teléfono celular

Correo electrónico

Datos de las mascotas:

Nombre

Especie/Tipo

Color

Núm. de registro

### Plan de acción

1. Los desastres que podrían afectarnos en casa son:

2. Las rutas de escape para salir de nuestra casa son:

3. Si nos separamos durante una emergencia, el lugar de encuentro cerca de la casa es:

4. Si no podemos regresar a la casa o hay que desalojar la vivienda, el lugar de encuentro fuera de nuestro vecindario es:

La ruta planificada (1) y la ruta alternativa (2), en caso de que la primera esté intransitable, son:

5. En caso de que nos separemos o no podamos comunicarnos entre nosotros, nuestro contacto de emergencia fuera de la zona es:

Nombre                      Teléfono de la casa      Teléfono celular      Correo electrónico

*Después de un desastre, avisa a tus familiares y amigos que te encuentras bien. Anótate en “Sano y salvo” en [sanoysalvo.org](http://sanoysalvo.org) o llama al 1-800-733-2767. También puedes llamarlos, enviar un mensaje de texto o mantenerlos actualizados mediante las redes sociales.*

6. En caso de desalojo durante el horario escolar/de guardería, nuestro(s) hijo(s) será(n) trasladado(s) a:

Nombre del niño                      Lugar en caso de desalojo (dirección y datos de contacto)

7. Nuestro plan para el familiar con discapacidad o necesidades especiales es:

Nombre                      Plan

8. Durante algunas emergencias las autoridades locales tal vez pidan al público que se resguarde en el lugar donde se encuentra (“shelter in place”). El lugar seguro y accesible en casa adonde podemos ir y sellar las ventanas, rejillas de ventilación y puertas; y estar atentos a la difusión de noticias o instrucciones de emergencia es:

9. Las responsabilidades de los miembros de la familia en casos de desastre son:

Tarea	Descripción	Miembro de la familia responsable
Equipo de suministros en casos de desastre*	Preparar un equipo de suministros en casos de desastre y ocuparse de llevarlo si hay que desalojar. Incluir cosas necesarias en un refugio para desplazados; no olvidarse de los medicamentos y anteojos.	
Información	Mantener el acceso a la radio local o de la NOAA, TV, correo electrónico o alertas de texto para estar actualizados sobre datos importantes y actualizados sobre el desastre.	
Información médica familiar	Asegurarse de mantener y llevar los datos médicos de la familia en caso de que haya que desalojar.	
Datos financieros	Obtener copias de informes bancarios y sacar dinero en efectivo en caso de que los cajeros automáticos y las tarjetas de crédito no funcionen si hay apagones. Llevar copias de cuentas de servicios como comprobantes de domicilio al solicitar asistencia.	
Datos de las mascotas	Desalojar a las mascotas, mantener una lista de hoteles que acepten mascotas y de refugios para mascotas, y preparar y llevar el equipo de portátil de suministros para casos de desastre para las mascotas.	
Notificación y mantenimiento del plan	Informar acerca del plan a quienes necesiten saberlo. Reunirse con la familia cada 6 meses o cuando cambien las necesidades para actualizar el plan familiar.	

\*¿Qué cosas y documentos debe tener tu equipo? Visita [www.cruzrojaamericana.org](http://www.cruzrojaamericana.org)

10. Otra información no incluida arriba:

*¡Felicitaciones! Ya hiciste tu plan familiar para casos de desastre. Avísale a otra gente. Diles: "Hicimos nuestro plan familiar para casos de desastre y tú también puedes hacerlo con la ayuda de la Cruz Roja Americana".*

Obtenga los hechos sobre qué debe hacer en caso de una emergencia o desastre a [www.cruzrojaamericana.org](http://www.cruzrojaamericana.org)