

"For safety's sake—do something."

When Disaster Strikes Will YOU Be Ready?

Every year, thousands of people are impacted by severe weather and natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, thunderstorms, floods, hurricanes, and ice or snow storms. We can't control when or where disaster will strike, however, we can be prepared by knowing what to do before, during, and after a severe weather event.



Download the free smartphone applications from the American Red Cross to stay up-to-date on severe weather in your area.



1. Go to <http://www.redcross.org>
2. Click on **Get Help**
3. Scroll down to **Prepare for Emergencies**
4. Click on **Free Mobile Apps**

Before: Plan ahead! Keep an [Emergency Supply Kit \(Ready.gov\)](#) that includes non-perishable food, water, flashlight, radio, and batteries. Create an [Emergency Plan \(Ready.gov\)](#) so that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Know where the shelter areas are at home and at work. Review your emergency evacuation routes and shelter areas so that you know where to go when an alarm is sounded. Know how to [Shut Off Utilities \(Ready.gov\)](#), such as power, gas, and water. Have a fire extinguisher handy; make sure everyone knows how to use it. Plan ahead!

During: [Monitor Weather Forecasts \(Ready.gov\)](#) and keep a lookout for darkening skies, flashes of light, and increasing wind. Close outside doors and windows, shades, and curtains. Pay close attention to building evacuation announcements and warnings to take shelter immediately when an alarm is sounded. Stay in a sheltered area until danger has passed. If there is lightning, do not use wired telephones, touch appliances, or run water. Cell phones are safe to use. Listen to a radio or television for weather updates.

After: Stay off of the roads to allow passage for emergency responders; limit travel for only necessary trips. Help injured or trapped persons, but do not attempt to move anyone who is seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of death or further injury. Stay away from downed utility wires and treat them all as live wires – report downed wires to authorities. Floodwaters may be contaminated, so don't walk or wade into them, if at all possible. Note that only six inches of fast-moving water can knock a person off their feet and cause drowning. Look for damage and hazards created by the storm and leave the area if you smell gas or chemical fumes.

[Ready.gov](#) provides detailed information on preparedness for all severe weather and natural disaster threats.

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Emergency Preparedness

Many people are concerned about the possibility of a public health emergency such as a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or disease outbreak. You can take steps now to help you prepare for an emergency and cope if an emergency happens. To help you prepare, we've provided step-by-step actions you can take beforehand to protect yourself and your loved ones.



Prepare A Kit (Plan for at least a three day supply)

- **Food and water:** one gallon of water per person per day, foods that won't spoil, can opener, and basic utensils.
- **Health supplies:** medicines, medical supplies.
- **Personal care items:** soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, baby wipes, etc.
- **Safety supplies:** first aid kit, emergency blanket, multipurpose tool (that can act as a knife, file, pliers, and screwdriver), and whistle.
- **Electronics:** flashlight, radio (battery-powered, solar, or hand-crank), cell phone with chargers, and extra batteries.
- **Misc:** map, cash, keys, and copies of important documents.
- **Children supplies:** bottles, formula, baby food, diapers, games, and activities.
- **Pets supplies:** food, water, litter box, cleaning supplies, transport supplies, toys.

NOTE: Check and replace your supplies throughout the year to keep it fresh. Know Your House: Find out where your gas, electric, and water shut-off locations are, and how to turn them off. Prepare For Everywhere: Emergencies can happen anywhere. Remember to prepare supplies for home, work, and vehicles.

Make A Plan

Family communication plan. Know emergency phone numbers. Make sure everyone in the family knows how to text. Text messages may go through even when phone lines are busy.

Family disaster plan. Know the types of emergencies in your area, what the warning signs are, and where to seek shelter. Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster. Determine the best escape routes from your home. Review these plans with all members of your family. Practice your disaster plans by running drills with the whole family.

Be Informed

Check with your local emergency management agency to find out what kinds of emergencies could happen in your area. Then: Find out how to get local emergency alerts. Check with your local health department or emergency management agency to see how they share emergency information.

The National Weather Service (NWS) issues severe weather watches, warnings, and advisories to alert the public when dangerous weather conditions are expected in the U.S. Do you know what each of them means?

Watch - A weather watch means there is the potential or conditions exist for a dangerous weather event.

Warning - A weather warning means that a dangerous weather event is imminent. Immediate action must be taken to protect life and property.

Advisory - A weather advisory means weather conditions that are less serious than a warning are imminent. These events may cause a significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, it could lead to a situation that may be threatening to life and property.

This information is brought to you from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. For more detailed information about emergency preparedness visit:
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/index.asp>