

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The best way to protect yourself and your family against disaster is to plan ahead. The following checklist from the American Red Cross is a good starting place.

Create an Emergency Plan:

- Meet with household members. Discuss with children the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes and other emergencies.
- Discuss how to respond to each of the above disasters.
- Discuss what do about power outages and personal injuries.
- Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark escapes routes from each room.
- Learn how to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches.
- Post emergency phone numbers near telephones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911, Police and Fire.
- Instruct household members to turn on the radio for emergency information.
- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within an affected area).
- Teach children how to make long distance calls.
- Pick two meeting places: a place near your home in case of a fire; a place outside your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home after a disaster.
- Take a basic first aid and CPR class.

Keep family records in a water and fire-proof container.

Here is a good resource for emergency preparedness:

http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_239_00.html

Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit:

Store the items in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffle bag.

Items to Include:

- A supply of water (one gallon per person per day). Some water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a manual can opener.
- A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications.
- An extra pair of eyeglasses.
- A battery powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
- Credit cards and cash.
- An extra set of car keys.
- A list of family physicians.
- A list of important information such as the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers.

Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.