

Disaster
Preparedness
for
Seniors



Prepare Now For A Sudden Emergency

- Disaster can strike quickly and without any warning
- Learn how to protect yourself and cope with disasters by planning ahead
- Even if you have physical limitations, you can still protect yourselfLocal officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away
- Take responsibility – Save your life
- Keep in touch with your neighbors and look out for each other
- Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility

Every day some part of the country is affected by one or more of the following emergencies: severe weather, chemical spills, earthquakes, tornadoes, flooding, or fires. Which two are most likely to happen in your area?

Preparing for a disaster that is most likely to happen in your area will help you be prepared for any disaster. Remember, anything can happen at any time.

How You May Be Notified Of A Possible Emergency

- NOAA weather radio
These special radios provide the earliest warning with an alarm that will alert you in case of anticipated bad weather. To learn more, call your local emergency management office or Utah Emergency Services.
- Commercial radio and television stations
Know your designated Emergency Alert System Stations (EAS).
My EAS Radio Station is: _____
My EAS Television Station is: _____
- Door to door warning from local emergency officials. Strictly follow their instructions. Be aware of anyone in your neighborhood who may need special help. If available, take advantage of advance registration systems in your area for those who may need your help.

Emergency Supplies

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a disaster supplies kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags or covered trash containers. Include:

- One change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your prescription medication
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks
- Sanitation supplies
- Extra pair of glasses
- Keep important documents in a waterproof container
- Keep a smaller kit in the back of your car
- Phone numbers of local and non-local relatives or friends
- Insurance agent's name and number
- Other items you may want to include:

It may not be necessary to evacuate. You may be ordered to stay in your home. If this happens, in addition to the above items, you will need:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil. Store water in a sealed, unbreakable container that you are able to handle. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- Non-perishable food supply, including any special foods that are easy to store and carry, nutritious and ready-to-eat; rotate regularly
- Manual can opener you are able to use
- Non-perishable foods for any pets

You should assemble enough supplies to last for at least three days. Assemble the supplies you would need in an evacuation, both medical and general supplies. Store them in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffle bag. Label any equipment, such as wheelchairs, canes or walkers that you would need.

Plan Ahead

Once disaster strikes, it is too late to prepare. Prepare now for a sudden emergency.

By planning ahead you can avoid waiting in long lines for critical supplies such as food, water and medicine. Remember to review your plan regularly.

Use The Following Checklist To Get Started:

- Assemble disaster supplies
- Arrange for someone to check on you
- Plan and practice the best escape routes from your home

- Plan for transportation if you need to evacuate to a Red Cross shelter
- Find the safe spots in your home for each type of emergency
- Have a plan to signal the need for help
- Post emergency phone numbers near the phone
- If you have home health care service, plan ahead with your agency for emergency procedures
- Teach those who may need to assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment. Be sure they will be able to reach you.
- For your safety and comfort, you need to have emergency supplies packed and ready in one place before disaster hits

For Your Medical Needs

- First-aid kit
- Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of any allergies
- Extra eyeglasses and hearing aid batteries
- Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen
- List of the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers
- Medical insurance and Medicare cards
- List doctors and relative or friend who should be notified if you are injured
- Any other items you may need:

Shelter-in-Place

In a chemical emergency you may be told to shelter in place. This means staying where you are and making yourself as safe as possible until the emergency passes or you are told to evacuate. In this situation it is safer to remain indoors than to go outside where the air is unsafe to breathe

If You Are Told To Shelter In Place:

- Close all windows in your home
- Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems
- Close the fireplace damper
- Go to an above ground room (not the basement) with the fewest windows and doors
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit with you
- Wet some towels and jam them under the crack of the door. Tape around the

- doors, windows, exhaust fans or vents. Use Plastic garbage bags to cover windows, outlets and heat registers
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds or curtains. To avoid injury, stay away from the windows.
 - Stay in the room and listen to your radio until you are told it is safe or you are told to evacuate

Going To A Shelter May Be Necessary

Red Cross shelters may be opened if:

- A disaster affects a large number of people
- The emergency is expected to last several days

Be prepared to go to a shelter if:

- Your area is without electrical power
- There is a chemical emergency affecting your area
- Flood water is rising
- Your home has been severely damaged
- Police and other local officials tell you to evacuate

Services provided at a Red Cross shelter:

- Food
- Temporary shelter
- Basic first aid

To learn about Red Cross shelters serving your area:

- Listen to your battery powered radio
- Check your local Red Cross chapter

All American Red Cross emergency services are provided free of charge!

If You Need To Evacuate:

- Coordinate with your home care provider for evacuation procedures
- Try to carpool, if possible
- If you must have assistance for special transportation, call the American Red Cross or your local officials
- Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit
- Lock your home
- Use travel routes specified or special assistance provided by local officials. Don't take any short cuts; they may be unsafe

- Notify shelter authorities of any special needs you may have. They will do their best to accommodate you and make you comfortable

If Disaster Strikes:

- Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action
- Check for injuries
- Listen to your battery-powered radio for news and instructions
- Evacuate, if advised to do so. Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes
- Use flashlights – do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage
- Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards
- Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly

Remember to . . .

- Confine or secure your pets. Pets are not allowed in Red Cross Shelters
- Call your family contact – do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency

For further information, contact:

Utah Department of Public Safety
Division of Homeland Security
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1110 State Office Building
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-1710
Phone: 801-538-3400
Fax: 801-538-3770
<http://beradyutah.gov>