

# Prepare in



# a Year



Being prepared for disasters may seem daunting or intimidating, but it's actually simple and easy! This Prepare in a Year book will help walk you through the important steps for disaster preparedness. It's as simple as completing one activity a month. By the end of 12 months, you'll be much better prepared!

Remember that everything you do to be prepared will help you in small emergencies, like a flat tire on your car, as well as large disasters, like a tornado or flood event. Think of disaster preparedness a continual process of learning, restocking supplies, and encouraging others to be prepared.

This book is your first step—congratulations! You are now on your personal preparedness journey. Questions? Contact [jbeneker@iksynod.org](mailto:jbeneker@iksynod.org)

**Adapted from Disaster Ready Washington**  
<https://mil.wa.gov/asset/5f171cc0a935f>



Indiana-Kentucky Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

# Prepare in a Year



## Step 1: Communications Plan



Prepare to be separated from your loved ones

**Fill out an out-of-area contact card for each household member to keep in a wallet, purse or backpack at all times.** If you are separated from your loved ones in the event of disaster, your first thoughts will be about your family, their location and if they are safe. The stress of the event may make it hard to remember even routine information.

### Out-of-area contacts

**Ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your contact person.** This person should live at least 100 miles away from you. They can send messages to your family in the affected area and then reply back to you. An out-of-area contact is the key piece of a great communications plan. Especially since the internet and cell phone signals may be sparse following a major event. **You may be able to send text messages to your loved ones on your cell phone. Keep these messages short.**




### Use the Web

**Research Emergency Apps.** The American Red Cross has an Emergency app that lets you link your contacts and send a safety message, as well as a place you can register yourself as “safe and well.” Facebook also has a “safety check” that can be implemented after a disaster.

### Official Sources

**Register with your local alert system.** Find out how officials will communicate with you. The Red Cross Emergency app will also send weather alerts.

Print out a card for every member of your household and fill in all information. Carry card to reference in the event of a disaster or other emergency.

<b>My Emergency Contact Information</b> 	<b>People to Call or Text in an Emergency</b> 
My Name: _____	_____
Phone: _____	_____
Home Address: _____	_____
_____	_____
Email: _____	_____
_____	_____
<b>Important Phone Nos.</b> 	_____
Police: Call 9-1-1 or _____	_____
Fire Dept.: Call 9-1-1 or _____	Out-of-Area Contact Person _____
Doctor: _____	Phone _____
Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222	Meeting Place Outside of Neighborhood: _____
_____	_____



# Prepare in a Year



## Step 2: Important Documents



After a major disaster, you may need financial assistance and will want to document any property loss for insurance and income tax purposes. Having ready access to the documents necessary for completing application forms, as well as those which could be difficult to replace, will help reduce delay and frustration.

### **Checklist of important household documents:**

Use a scanner or your cell phone's camera to take pictures of these important items and then put them on an encrypted flash drive. Password protection is important because you don't want private information to fall into someone's hands by accident.

- Property insurance papers (home, renter's, auto, boat, etc.) and make copies.
- Gather health insurance papers (medical provider, dental provider, life, extended disability, etc.) and make copies.
- Gather financial papers (bank, investment, retirement, etc.) and make copies.
- Gather wills, powers of attorney, and estate papers and make copies.
- Take photos or videos of all valuables as documentation for insurance claims.

If you have physical copies, store these copies and photos in a safe deposit box or a fireproof box.

### **Checklist of important personal documents:**

- Household (anything to help identify people in your household, children, pets): marriage/birth/death certificates, passport, social security cards, driver's licenses, green card, pet microchip information.
- Financial (anything to help you request insurance and disaster assistance after a disaster): lease/home ownership, vehicle registration, title, loan, utility bills, proof of address, banking accounts, retirement/investment accounts, insurance policies — home, auto, renter's, life, flood, sources of income-paystubs, proof of employer.
- Medical: health/dental insurance, medicare, medicaid, Veteran's benefits, lists of medications, doctor office phone numbers, medical power of attorney, disabilities documentation.
- Emergency contact info: doctor office, dental office, pediatricians, pet vets, employer, supervisor, schools.
- Valuables: photos of valuables, copies of family photos, photos of home.

**QUICK TIP:** Strengthen your financial preparedness for disasters and emergencies by downloading FEMA's Emergency Financial First Aid Kit at <http://bit.ly/EFFAK1>

# Prepare in a Year



## Step 3: Action Plan Overview



### What Disasters can affect you?

Communities throughout the Midwest are subject to many types of disasters. While we hope that these disasters never happen, it has been shown that being prepared for disasters is wise. This is the time for you to research your local hazards. In our region we are mostly susceptible to tornados, flash flooding, fire and others. You can learn how to prepare for these hazards by searching online, by attending local workshops, and by following your county's Emergency Management Department as well as your state's Homeland Security pages.

### Create a Disaster Plan

First, set up a meeting with your family to discuss the different types of disasters that are likely to happen. Share ideas around how your family might be more prepared and come up with a plan to put those measures in place. Share responsibilities and work together as a team. Next, develop a family/household communication plan. How will you be in touch, and what will you do if you are separated. Lastly, pick two places to meet: (1) right outside your home. (2) Outside of your neighborhood in case you can't return home. \*Everyone must know the address and phone number.

### Put your Plan into Action

Teach children how and when to call 911. Show them how your cell phone works. Post emergency telephone numbers in a visible location. Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches. Other tips:

- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC fire extinguisher in your home. Teach each family member to use it and where it is kept. (See Step Seven)
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of your home, in appropriate areas.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble disaster supply kits.
- Take a First Aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find a safe spot in your home for each type of disaster.

# Prepare in a Year



## Step 3: Action Plan

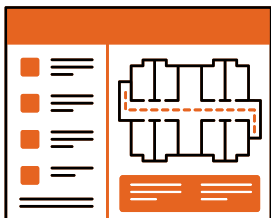


### What to do NOW

- Learn about your community's warning signals – what do they sound like and what should you do when you hear them?
- Learn which outlets will provide emergency information for your area.
- Learn about animal care in your area.
- If you are disabled and unable to care for yourself, your planning needs to include your support network who will help you and your household.
- Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or child care center and other places your family frequently visits.

### Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Review your plans every six months so everyone re members what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguishers, according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors every month; replace batteries every six months.
- Replace stored water and food every six months to a year, depending on expiration dates.
- Update plan as necessary.



### Potential Threats

- **Severe Storm and Tornadoes -** Tornadoes are among the most violent natural atmospheric phenomena. The risks of death and injury from tornadoes can be minimized by learning about them, planning for them, understanding the warning process, and following basic safety rules.
- **Flood -** Floods are one of the most common and most devastating natural disasters. They cause widespread destruction to homes, infrastructure, and communities. They can be sudden and violent.
- **Wildfire-** Increase your preparedness by knowing your evacuation routes, finding several ways to leave your area. Have plans for pets and livestock and gather emergency supplies to have on hand.
- **Drought -** Drought is a slow-onset disaster that can impact a region for months or years. It can intersect with other natural hazards like wildfire.
- **Landslide -** Landslide is the movement of rock, soil and debris down a hillside or slope. Neighbors living on or below a slope should work together to reduce their landslide risk.
- **Hazardous Material -** These are incidents where the release of a material, that because of their chemical, physical or biological nature pose a potential risk to life, health, environment or property.

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## Step 4: Evacuation Plan



### Evacuation Planning

A wide variety of emergencies may cause an evacuation. In some instances, you may have a day or two to prepare, while other situations might call for an immediate evacuation. Planning is vital to ensuring that you can evacuate quickly and safely, regardless of the circumstances.

### Before an Evacuation

- Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.
- Identify several places you could go in an emergency. Like a friend's home in another town or a hotel.
- Choose destinations in different directions so that you have options during an emergency.
- If needed, identify a place to stay that will accept pets. Shelters may or may not be able to accommodate your pet. Have supplies ready to take.
- Be familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.
- Always follow the instructions of local officials and remember that your evacuation route may be on foot depending on the type of disaster.
- Assemble supplies that are ready for evacuation, both a "go-bag" you can carry when you evacuate on foot/ bicycle or public transportation and larger supplies for traveling in a personal vehicle.

### If you evacuate by car

If an evacuation is urgent, you will not have time to prepare, which is why it is important to plan ahead.

- Plan to take one car per family to reduce delay.
- Make sure you have a portable emergency kit in the car.
- If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave via other forms of transportation or on foot.
- Always keep a half tank of gas in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Keep a full tank of gas if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages.

\* Certain evacuations may require an evacuation by foot.



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## Step 4: Evacuation Plan



### During an Evacuation

During an evacuation you will want to consider the following items:

- A list of open shelters is typically announced on social media or traditional media. But don't wait for a shelter to open; pre-arrange places to stay ahead of time.
- Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by impending hazards.
- Follow your local official's messages in regard to bringing animals to shelters.
- If there is time, call, text or email the out-of-area contact in your family communications plan. Tell them where you are going.
- Secure your home by closing and locking doors and windows.
- Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding. If instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Wear sturdy shoes and clothing that provides some protection such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and a hat.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts; they may be blocked.
- Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas,

### After an Evacuation

- Check with local officials before you travel back to areas impacted by the disaster.
- If an area is closed, stay out! It is closed for your safety.
- Depending on the disaster, many residents may be in public shelters for an undetermined time frame.
- Residents returning to disaster-affected areas after significant events should expect and prepare for disruptions to daily activities and remember that returning home before debris is cleared is dangerous.
- Some events may mean that there is not a home to return to.
- Fill up your gas tank and consider downloading a fuel app to check for outages along your route.
- Bring supplies such as water and non-perishable food for the car/bus ride.
- Avoid downed power or utility lines; they may be live with deadly voltage.

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## Step 5: Grab and Go Bag



Everyone should have their own kit (some supplies are for the group). Encourage kids to make their own kits, too, because what's important to them, may not be as important to you. In the event of rapid evacuation, you'll appreciate having more than just the clothes on your back.

### How to Store an Evacuation Kit

1. You should take proactive steps to create a kit that you can take with you in times of an emergency that will last you for two to three days. It should be lightweight and easy to carry.
2. Store these items in something that is portable and easily carried, like a backpack or tub/suitcase with wheels. Place items in plastic bags to protect against water. Plastic bags used for produce (like apples and oranges in a grocery store) could be a good choice. These can later be used for disposing of waste.
3. Locate these supplies as close to your primary house exit as possible. You may have to find it in the dark or after the upheaval of an emergency. A coat closet may be a good place or as part of a car kit may work as well. Consider keeping this kit in your vehicle. Then, you will always have supplies with you.

### Water

For this grab and go kit, keep a supply of water that will last you 2-3 days for each person in your household. ~ 1 quart per person per day. (See Water, Step Three). You could also purchase portable water filters or water sterilizers. Remember, a gallon of water per day includes cooking. If you do not cook with grab and go supplies, carrying less water is an option.

### Food

Store a supply of food that will last you two to three days. Select foods that require no refrigeration or cooking, and little or no water. Purchase foods you like so it will be easy to rotate items near expiration and consider specific dietary needs as well as chemical/food sensitivity:

- High energy foods — peanut butter, granola bars, trail mix
- Comfort foods — cookies, hard candy, etc.
- Dry meats like beef sticks and jerky

### Pet Grab and Go

Pets need a grab and go kit, too! Have two to three days of food, water, any of their medications, leashes and cages if reasonable.

### Kit supplies

- Food Water Flashlight
- Extra batteries Light sticks
- Radio (battery/crank)
- Whistle
- Toiletries & wet wipes (save water for drinking)
- Access to important documents
- First aid kit
- Multi-purpose tool and knife
- Garbage/plastic bag
- Cell Phone charging cord/extra battery
- Medications
- Pet items
- Duct tape
- A set of extra clothes
- Hat and gloves
- Items you need for children and other household members

If this kit is used for your car, add:

- Small shovel
- Jumper cables
- Tow chain
- Road flare
- Waterproof blanket
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Seasonal equipment
- Extra keys

**QUICK TIP: Rotate items annually. This includes making sure the clothes you have stored still fit.**

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## Step 6: Water



**Water** quickly becomes a precious resource following many disasters. It is vital that all household members learn how to shut off the water at the main house valve so that you don't lose clean water which you could use. The effects of gravity may drain the water in your hot water and toilet tanks unless you trap it in your house by shutting off the main house valve (not the street valve in the cement box at the curb). Label this valve with a tag for easy identification, and make sure all household members know where it is located. In addition to storing water, be aware of your surroundings and where you can find other sources of water. Available water sources include hot water heaters, toilet tanks, streams, lakes, rivers, etc. **Consider adding a water filter to your kits so that you can safely use water you find.**

### How much water should I store?

For your household, we recommend at least two weeks' worth of water. That's one gallon per person per day to take care of drinking, cooking and hygiene needs. You might need less depending on your cooking methods and if you're using wet wipes for hygiene. Plan to drink at minimum one quart of water per person per day. Remember to have water for your pets, too!

### Which containers should I use?

Plastic containers with a screw-cap lid, such as two-liter soda pop bottles or food-grade plastic jugs, work great. Don't use glass bottles or old bleach bottles (or any container that has held a toxic substance). Avoid the use of plastic milk jugs. (They are difficult to seal tightly, and their plastic becomes very fragile and brittle over time).

### Storing Water

We know storing 14 gallons per person is difficult, especially for large families. Having food that will not use water is one way to minimize water storage. Consider multiple locations to store water, especially in an apartment or small house. Thoroughly rinse out the container and the lid with water and fill it to the very top of the container.

- Seal the container tightly.
- Label it "Drinking Water" and date it.
- Store it in a cool, dark place.

### Distillation

This is one method of purification in addition to filters and purification tablets.

1. Fill a pot halfway with water.
2. Tie a cup to the handle on the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side up when the lid is placed upside-down on the pot (make sure the cup is not dangling in the water).
3. Boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled. This method allows the vapor resulting from boiling water to collect in the cup. This condensed vapor will not include salts or other impurities.

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## Step 7: Get 2 Weeks Ready



## Prepare to be on your own for two weeks

When a large disaster happens, it may take two weeks for resources to help us. You may be on your own. Coping with the impacts of a disaster is never fun. However, by planning alternative ways to take care of your needs, you can reduce much of the inconvenience and discomfort. Take things one step at a time. You can buy items at discount or dollar stores over multiple trips.

### Lighting

- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Camping lanterns: (battery-operated only for inside use. Candles are not recommended and may cause fires).
- Light sticks: These can provide light for 1-12 hours and can be purchased at many department stores.
- Solar lights: Lights that can be recharged using the sun (still works to a degree when cloudy, too).

### Shelter

Having an alternate means of shelter will help you and your family be as comfortable as possible.

- Tent or waterproof tarp.
- Sleeping bags or blankets and pillows.
- Rain gear.
- Emergency/space blankets (compact and easy to store).
- Newspapers or magazines provide insulation from the cold or heat.
- If you have a van, camper or RV, it can be used as your alternate shelter.

**QUICK TIP:** Being 2 Weeks Ready is as simple as adding one can of food to your cart every time you go grocery shopping to add to your disaster supplies. Don't forget about your pet, too!

### Cooking

- \*Never burn charcoal or use camp stoves indoors. This could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Camp stoves, sterno or butane stoves, barbecues – gas or charcoal.
- Fireplaces – do not use if the chimney and flue have not been inspected for cracks. Sparks may escape into your attic through an undetected crack and start a fire.
- Since a lot of emergency food options are “Just add water/hot water,” use clean or filtered water or boil for appropriate time when cooking.
- Washing dishes won't be easy, but it's still doable. Warm water over a stove. Otherwise, use disposable utensils, cups and plates.

### Protecting food when the power is out

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to 6 hours.
- A full freezer will maintain safe temperatures for one or two days; a half-full freezer one day.
- Discard at-risk refrigerated foods that are warmer than 40 degrees F. If in doubt, THROW IT OUT.
- If the power will be out for several days, find some ice to pack inside the refrigerator and freezer.
- Remember to keep your raw foods separate from your ready-to-eat foods.

# Prepare in a Year



## Step 7: Get 2 Weeks Ready



### When do I save and when do I throw out food?

Refrigerated foods should be safe as long as the power is out no more than a few hours and the doors have been kept closed. Frozen foods which are still frozen are not a problem. If potentially hazardous foods are thawed but still have ice crystals, you should use them as soon as possible.

### How do I know if the food is unsafe to eat?

You cannot rely upon appearance or odor. Never taste food to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they've been warm too long, food poisoning bacteria may have grown enough to make you sick.

### What happens when the power comes back on?

Allow time for refrigerators to reach the proper temperature of lower than 40°F before restocking with all fresh foods.

Foods are categorized into groups. The **potentially hazardous foods** are the most important to know. These include meats, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs and egg products, soft cheeses, cooked beans, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, custards, puddings, etc. Some food may not be hazardous, but the **quality may be affected**. These include salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter, margarine, produce, hard cheeses, etc. Lastly, some foods are **safe**. These include carbonated beverages, unopened bottled juices, ketchup, mustard, relishes, jams, peanut butter, barbecue sauces, etc.

### Sanitation

The lack of sanitation facilities following major disasters can quickly create secondary problems unless basic guidelines are followed. If the water lines are damaged or if damage is suspected do not flush the toilet. Avoid digging holes in the ground. Untreated raw sewage can pollute fresh ground water supplies. It also attracts flies and promotes the spread of diseases. Store a large supply of heavy-duty plastic bags, twist ties, disinfectant and toilet paper. A good disinfectant that is easy to use and low cost is a solution of one-part liquid bleach to ten-parts water. If the toilet is not able to be flushed, it can still be used. This is less stressful for most people than using some other container:

1. Remove all the bowl water
2. Line bowl with a heavy-duty plastic bag.
3. Add a small amount of deodorant or disinfectant.
4. Securely tie the bag and dispose of it in a large trash can with a tight-fitting lid. This large trash can should also be lined with a sturdy trash bag.

Portable camp toilets, small trash cans, or sturdy buckets lined with heavy-duty plastic bags can also be used. Those with tight fitting lids are best. Large plastic bags and toilet paper should be kept at work and in the car for use if you are away from home.

### Kit supplies

Your Grab & Go Kit can be a starter kit for home; add to it to be 2 weeks ready at home.

#### Food:

- Canned Meats, Fruits, and Vegetables
- Canned Juices and Soups
- High Energy Foods- Peanut Butter, Granola Bars, Trail Mix
- Comfort Foods - Cookies, Hard Candy, etc.
- Dry Meats like Beef Sticks and Jerky
- Freeze dried "emergency food." Meals Ready to Eat.
- 

#### First Aid Supplies:

- Sterile 4" Adhesive Bandages
- Sterile 4" x 4" Gauze Pads
- 4" Rolled Gauze Bandages
- Large Triangular Bandages
- Butterfly Bandages
- Adhesive Tape
- Scissors & Tweezers
- Moistened Towelettes
- Bar Soap
- Latex Gloves
- Aspirin
- Antacid
- Anti-Diarrhea Medication
- Instant Cold Packs
- Antibiotic ointment to dress wounds
- Safety pins
- Needle & Thread
- Sanitary Supplies
- Splinting Materials

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## Step 7: Get 2 Weeks Ready



You likely already have many of these supplies at home. You don't need to go shopping and spend lots of money on supplies. Start with collecting what you have at home. Some communities recommend you have supplies for even longer than 2 weeks. Check with your local emergency managers.

### More kit supplies Miscellaneous:

- Paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
- Battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio
- Extra batteries
- Flashlight, Head Lamp or Solar Lantern
- Non-electric Can Opener
- ABC Fire Extinguisher
- Whistle
- Insect Repellent & Sunscreen
- Toilet Paper
- Toothpaste, toothbrush and other hygiene items
- Feminine Supplies
- Roll of Plastic and Duct tape to seal broken windows
- Plastic bags for waterproofing
- N95 Air Mask
- Cell Phone Charging Cord
- Portable Cell Phone Battery
- Pocket Knife/Multi-Tool u Extra Eyeglasses
- Prescription Drugs and Medications
- A Family Picture
- Games and Books
- Contact Lens Solution
- Backups for assistive devices
- Wheelchair Repair Kit

### Pet Kit

- Sturdy leashes and harnesses
- Blankets & towels
- Printed photos to identify lost pets and prove ownership
- Medications and medical records stored in waterproof container
- First aid kit
- Food and water
- Bowls, cat litter, litter box and a manual can opener
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, name and number of veterinarian
- Supplies to manage dog waste and grooming

### Sanitation:

- Bucket toilet
- Heavy-duty garbage bags
- Bleach and Liquid Soap
- Baby Diapers Clothing & Bedding:
- Multiple changes of clothes depending on the season (cold or warm)
- Blankets or Sleeping Bags
- Mylar (Emergency / Space) blankets
- Sturdy Shoes
- Warm Socks
- Hat and Gloves
- Poncho
- Waterproof jacket

### Important documents:

- Copies of Insurance Policies
- Bank Account Numbers
- Inventory of valuables
- Family Records

**QUICK TIP:** Choose significant dates 6 months apart from each other as reminders to rotate emergency supplies. Your birthday and half-birthday are one idea.

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## Step 8: Fire Safety



# Know what to do before, during and after a fire

## Smoke Detectors

Install outside bedrooms on the ceiling or high on the wall, away from corners, at the top of open stairways (or the bottom of enclosed stairs) and near (but not in) the kitchen. For free Red Cross smoke alarms, visit [GetASmokeAlarm.org](http://GetASmokeAlarm.org)

## Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- Should be installed on every level of your residence
- About 18 inches from the floor
- In the area where your heating system is located
- Replace batteries when you rotate supplies in your kits.

## Flammable Items

- Never use or store gasoline, kerosene or similar flammable liquids inside your home. (Store them in approved containers in well-ventilated storage areas).
- Discard all rags and materials that have been soaked in flammable liquids (Place them outdoors in a metal container).

## Matches and Smoking

- Store matches and lighters up high, away from children and if possible, in a locked cabinet.
- Never smoke in bed or when drowsy or medicated.
- Douse cigarette and cigar butts with water before disposal in an outdoor container.

## Heating Sources

- Use alternative heat sources, such as woodstoves or space heaters, according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Never use gas ovens, stoves, barbecues or propane heaters for indoor heating.
- Place heaters at least 3 feet away from flammable material.

## Electrical Wiring

- Inspect extension cords for frayed or exposed wires and loose plugs.
- Make sure outlets have cover plates and that no wires are exposed.
- Do not overload extension cords or outlets.

## Fire Extinguishers

- Install ABC fire extinguishers in your home and teach family members how to use them using the PASS method (see graphic on this page).
- Have one extinguisher per floor in your home as well as one in the kitchen and one in the garage.
- Place the extinguisher away from the stove and near the door of the kitchen for easy access. The same for the garage.
- Even though the extinguisher may not match décor, do not place the extinguisher in a closet or behind drapes or curtains.

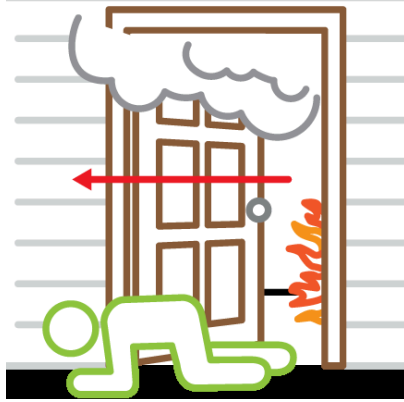


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## Step 8: Fire Safety



### Exiting Buildings

- If there is a fire or when the smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors sounds, leave immediately!
- Do not try to fight the fire. Once outside, do not re-enter the home for any reason!
- Call 911 from a cell phone once outside, or from a neighbor's house.
- Know the location of all exits including the windows. (If you live in an apartment, count the number of doorways between your apartment and the two nearest exits. This will help you leave safely in the dark).
- If the nearest exit is blocked by fire, heat or smoke go to another exit.
- If you must escape through a closed door, check for heat before opening it. Use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame before you open it. If it is hot, do not open it and escape through a window.
- If your clothes catch fire, "stop, drop and roll" until the fire is out.
- If caught in smoke: drop to your hands and knees and crawl, breathe shallowly through your nose and use your shirt or jacket as a filter.
- If you are in a room and cannot escape, leave the door closed, stay low to the floor and hang a white or light-colored sheet outside the window to alert firefighters of your presence.

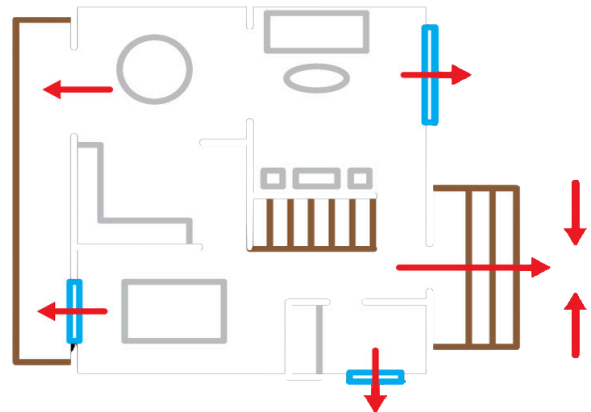
- Always use an exit stairway, not an elevator. (Elevator shafts may fill with smoke or the power may fail, leaving you trapped).
- Stairway fire doors will keep out fire and smoke - if they are closed - they will protect you until you get outside.
- Close as many doors as possible as you leave. (This helps to confine the fire and gives you time to escape).

### Electrical Fires

1. Shut off the electricity at the main breaker.
  2. Put out the fire by using an extinguisher, dirt, or water.
- CAUTION: If the electricity cannot be shut off, DO NOT use water on the fire.

### Oil or Grease Fires

- Use baking soda, a lid, a bread board or a fire extinguisher to smother the flames.
- NEVER use water on a grease or an oil fire.



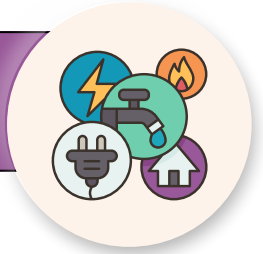
### Practicing fire safety

Choose a safe place outside your home to reunite with your family. Regularly remind all household members of the location. Draw the floor plan of your home and discuss two ways to exit each room. Hold a fire drill at least twice each year.

# Prepare in a Year

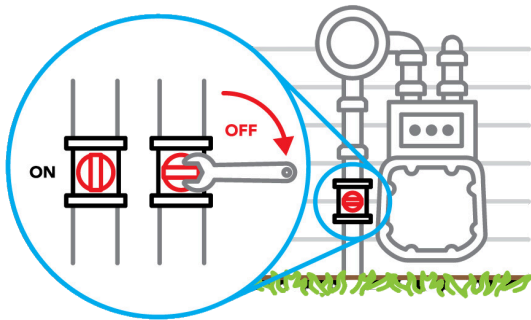


## Step 9: Utility Safety



### Natural Gas

Flood waters and storm damage pose the risk of uprooting trees and exposing underground pipes and utility lines, creating the potential for damaged natural gas lines/leaks. This can lead to explosion and/or fire.



Here are some steps to shut off the natural gas:

1. Locate the shut-off valve (make sure this valve will turn. To shut off the gas, turn the valve 90 degrees or 1/4 turn, so that it crosses the pipe).
2. If your valve is rusted open, do NOT put WD-40™ lubricant on it. It may corrode the O-rings that allow the valve to turn.
3. Attach a wrench to the meter or to the wall directly behind the meter.
4. Choose a crescent wrench that is at least 12-inches long.
5. Adjust it to fit your valve before hanging it behind the meter in case it rusts.

### Turn the gas and electric off after storm damage and/or flooding.

Shut off the gas immediately if you:

- Smell the odor of gas (rotten eggs).
- Hear a hissing sound.
- The meter dials spin more rapidly than normal.

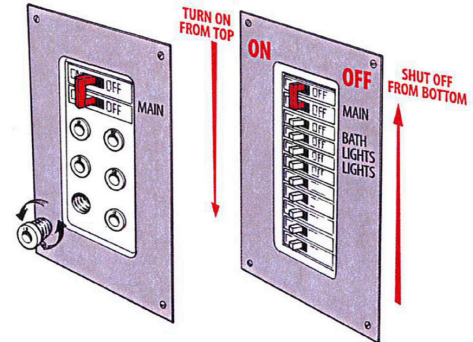
Do not use matches, lighters, open flame appliances or operate any electrical switches until you are sure no gas leaks exist.

Sparks from electrical switches could ignite the gas. If you smell natural gas, immediately get everyone out of and away from the house. Open the windows and doors to provide ventilation. Shut off the gas at the meter.

### Propane

Have your home's propane tank properly installed by a qualified professional and serviced on a regular basis. Propane tanks are extremely flammable.

- Do NOT store tanks in a building, garage, or enclosure.
- When not connected for use, keep tank valve turned OFF.
- Never store a spare tank beneath a grill.
- Always store tanks upright.
- Never store a tank in temperatures of 125 F degrees or more.
- Never use or store a propane tank indoors.
- Do not try to repair a damaged tank or tank valve.
- Do not use portable propane heaters, stoves, or lanterns in tents, campers, truck caps, RVs, or other unventilated enclosures, especially while sleeping.



### Electricity

Electrical has the potential of igniting natural gas or starting a fire.

- Locate your electricity circuit box
- Teach all responsible household members how to shut off the electricity to the entire house.
- Check the cords of appliances in your home as well as the plugs and connectors. Make sure they are not frayed, cracked or damaged or placed under rugs or carpets, resting on furniture, or located in high traffic areas.
- Do not nail or staple cords to walls, floor, or any other objects.
- Inspect all outdoor connections, appliances and tools for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings.

# Prepare



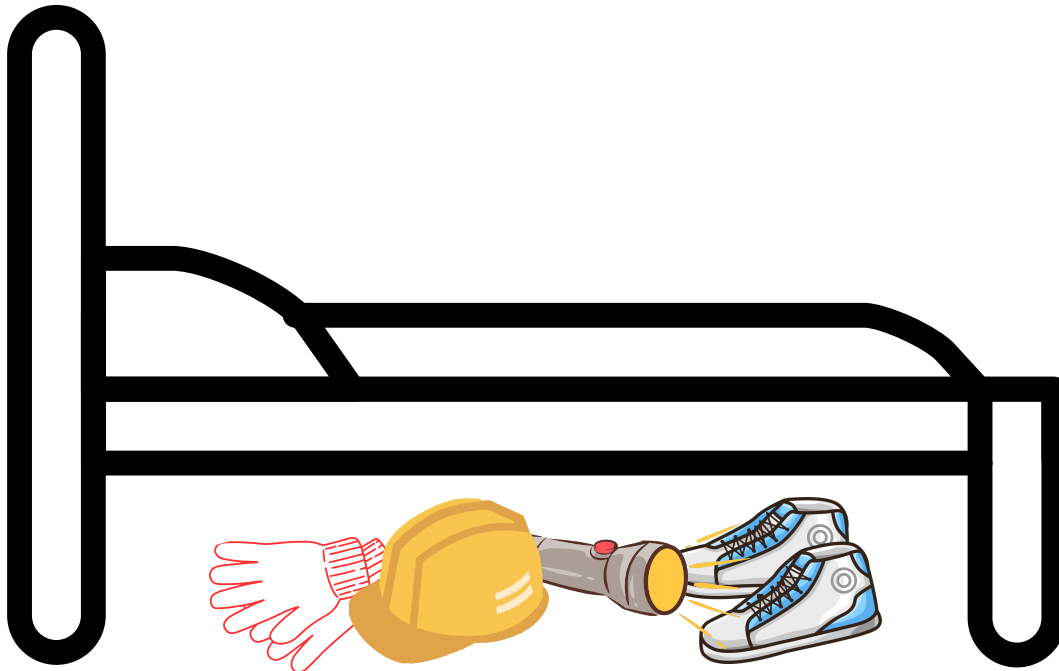
in a  
Year

## Step 10: Under the Bed



## Day or night: Ready to Respond

When disaster strikes, it may be difficult to think as rationally as in normal conditions. The more procedures you have in place, and the easier they are to remember and implement, the more effective and efficient will be your response. We recommend that you keep these basic response supplies under the bed. That way, day or night, you'll know where to go to get the essentials.



### Critical Under the Bed Items

- Sturdy shoes — to protect your feet from broken glass.
- Work gloves, preferably leather — to protect your hands from broken glass.
- Flashlight & light sticks — essential for a nighttime response.

### Additional Recommended Under the Bed Items

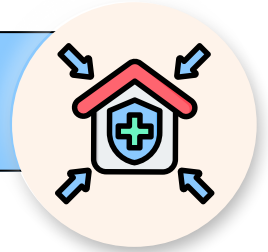
- Hard hat — to protect you from falling objects like chimney bricks, and downed trees and branches. Bicycle helmets also work.
- An OK/ HELP card or a sheet of paper and marker for you to write on yourself.
- Tape or adhesive bandages to hang the OK/ Help card in the window or on the front door.
- Place a copy of your out-of-area contact card in a plastic bag.
- A whistle (to call for help).

**QUICK TIP:** Keep it simple. Instead of throwing them away, put your old tennis shoes or garden shoes under your bed!

# Prepare in a Year



## Step 11: Shelter in Place



## What does shelter in place mean?

Shelter in place is not the same as “staying inside” a building. Sheltering in place is creating a “safe room” in your home. A true shelter-in-place order is because of a chemical, biological or radiological threat. If a chemical agent leak happens (i.e. ammonia, radiation, hazardous materials), authorities will instruct people to either shelter where they are and seal the premises (shelter in place) or evacuate immediately. A chemical release is an accidental release of harmful chemicals into the air. It can occur at manufacturing plants, from accidents involving transport trucks or trains, from terrorist acts or even as a result of a fire at an industrial area. Generally, shelter where you are unless directed otherwise by response officials. It is only natural to want to be with your loved ones, but it is safer to stay where you are. Do not attempt to get your children from school or daycare. Instead, ask your school ahead of time what their plans are.

### Before an Incident

To properly shelter-in-place you will need to prepare a “safe room” in advance. You will likely need to stay inside several hours, but not several days, so choose a room and stock supplies to get you through the time. A good example of this includes a master bedroom with an attached bathroom to give you access to a toilet and running water or a bathroom. Contact your local emergency management office to identify which chemical hazards may be present in your area. If you live near industrial areas or are within 2,000 feet of a major highway or train tracks that carry industrial materials, you are in an area that may be prone to chemical leaks. Shelter in place is a very short-term protective action and at some point, determined by public officials, you will be told to leave your home or to open everything up if the hazard has passed by. Know how to get an emergency alert notification. It will be on radio, TV and official’s social media. Find out from your local emergency management officials what alerts they would use. Be sure you are registered if that is required.

### Preparing your Safe Room

Purchase plastic sheeting and duct tape. Pre-cut the plastic to fit all windows, vents, and doors of this room, and label each piece. Create a box or container for your safe room to hold the pre-cut plastic, tape and these additional supplies:

- A battery-powered AM / FM radio (power may be out) with extra batteries
- Water and snacks
- Some towels and blankets (if this is another room than the bedroom)

If you haven’t prepared a room ahead of time, don’t panic. You can still safely use garbage bags instead of plastic tarp or your shower curtain to help cover windows, vents and doors.

# Prepare

in a  
Year

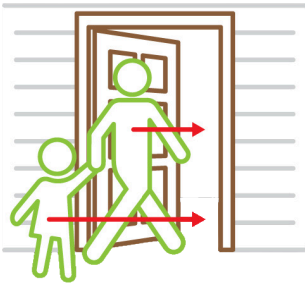


## Step 11: Shelter in Place



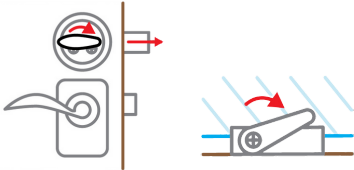
### 1. Go inside immediately.

Remember your kids and pets.



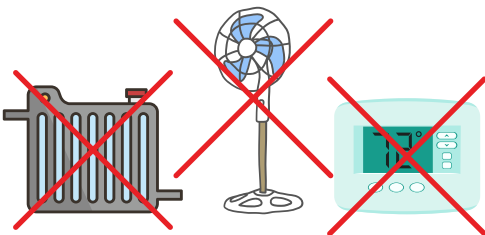
### 2. Tightly lock all doors and windows.

The faster you do this, and the more tightly, the less likely contaminants will get inside.



### 3. Shut off fans and devices that circulate air throughout your home.

- Shut off fans.
- If a fire is lit, put it out. Shut the vents and doors.
- Tightly close wood stove and fireplace dampers.
- Adjust thermostat or furnaces and air conditioners to shut off and stay off.

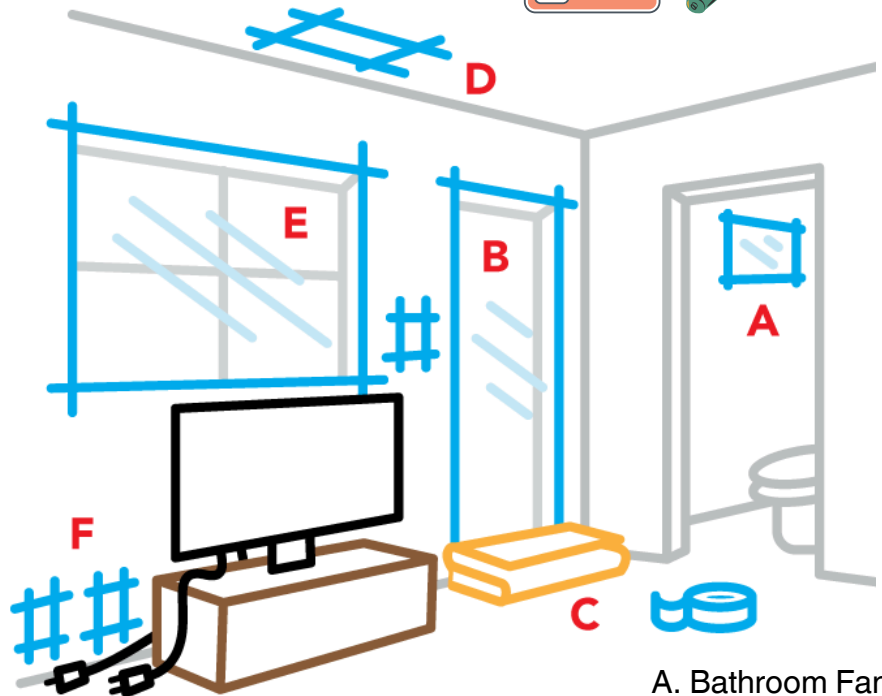


### 4. Get into your pre-selected room and seal it tightly.

- Tape plastic sheeting over windows, doors, vents, bathroom fans, electrical outlets.
- Remember, you are creating a tightly sealed room, so freely use tape.
- Place dampened towels under door cracks to tightly seal them.

### 5. Listen to media for instructions.

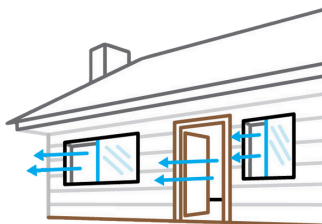
- Use radio, TV or social media to check for official instructions on when it's safe to come out or whether to evacuate. On social media, only follow trusted sources.



- A. Bathroom Fan.  
B. Pre-cut plastic sheeting over door frame.  
C. Dampened towels under door to tightly seal.  
D. Tape forced-air registers (on ceiling and floor).  
E. Pre-cut plastic sheeting over window frame.  
F. Tape outlets, TV cables, switches, landline jacks.

### 6. Thoroughly air out your home once the emergency is over

- Open your doors and windows. This will allow small particles that may have gotten in to dissipate.

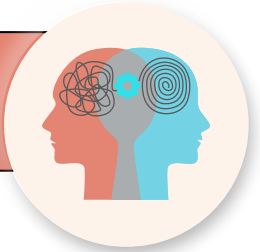


# Prepare



in a  
Year

Step 12: Emotional Preparedness



## Building our Feelings First Aid Kit

Challenges and loss, fear, anger, sadness and worry can impact us in all kinds of ways. It's impossible for us to know how we will respond in the event of a disaster. Everyone will experience a multitude of emotions and will act in ways that are likely not typical for them.

Emotions are a part of the human experience. They are not inherently good or bad. There are some things we can do to prepare to emotionally to face difficult situations in life.

**1. Create an emotional first aid kit** to use when emotions feel overwhelming. This kit may include things like pictures, comforting objects, special materials such as a special shirt or a special blanket, music, books, prayers or scriptures, journals, to-do lists, or other items that you think may support your needs.

If you are using medications now, make sure you talk with your doctor about how to access these medications in the event of an emergency.

**2. Building relationships** and healthy connections to family, neighbors, colleagues, faith groups, peers, and communities contribute to emotional well-being.

**3. Identify trusted sources of information.** Keeping up with the local news media will likely be necessary during an emergency, and plan to limit news and communications that are distressing or unreliable.

**4. Identify your strengths and how you can help.** In an emergency some people will help by providing physical aid to the wounded, some may have access to equipment or machinery, others may offer their skills in problem solving and coordinating, while others will provide emotional care, and some will need to tend to their families and children who have just experienced a traumatic event. Using your talents and strengths when you are overwhelmed can help.

**5. Identify some Professional Resources.** As the emergency passes and we move into recovery some individuals may need additional help processing experienced trauma. Counselors can help work through unhelpful thoughts, provide advice and strategies, and help you make good decisions for your mental and social well-being.

**6. Remember to find hope and to give others grace.** Do things that help your spirit heal. Maybe that is reading scripture or spending time in a special place in prayer. Try different things that may help you feel better like exercising, drawing, writing, or listening to music. It's ok to want to be alone, but it's also important to spend time with people who love you. Talk to them and ask for help when you need it. There is no timeline for recovery, and it is normal if you don't feel better right away. God knows what we are going through, and he is with us on our way.