

ARE YOU READY?

Emergency Preparedness and Response

Tornados, floods, earthquakes, fire. These words can, and often times do, strike fear in the minds of people. It is important to understand the importance of having an emergency plan and using that plan. A person that is prepared will not live in fear.

Make a plan:

- I. Find out what could happen to you. By learning what your risks may be, you can prepare for the disaster most likely to occur in your area. Contact your local emergency management office or the local American Red Cross chapter. Come with a pen and paper to take notes.
- II. Does your community have a public warning system? What about animal care after a disaster? If you care for the elderly or disabled persons, how can you help them?
- III. Create a Family Disaster Plan: Meet with your family and discuss why you need a disaster plan, and what needs to be in the plan.

The most important point to remember is that all disasters are local and you are the first responder for your own well-being.

Your kit should contain items that you need and food that you will eat. If you don't like peanut butter, don't put it in the kit!

Most kits are for 72 hours, but as we have seen in past disasters, 5-7 days is more likely.

You don't have to buy these kits from emergency places. You can make a kit, using a bucket, backpack, or a suitcase.

A bucket filled with supplies can help sustain you and your family.

What goes in the bucket? Where do I get the items?

The first item to put in your kit is **water**. The rule of thumb is one gallon per person per day for drinking and sanitation. Water is packed in boxes and or pouches as well as in bottles. You want to make it as light weight as possible since you will be transporting this kit. Don't forget food and water for your pets!

- A. Food: at least a three to five day supply of non-perishable items. Vacuum packed tuna, salmon, chicken, peanut butter, bags of nuts and dried fruits. Get as much low-salt items as possible since your supply of water is limited. Mess kits, paper cups plastic utensils, paper towels, pen and paper. If you are packing canned foods, make sure you pack a can opener. **Prescription medications and glasses.**
- B. **Important family documents such as insurance policies, identification, and bank account records, preferably on a flash-drive or at least in a damage resistant container.**
- C. Cell phone, battery-powered or hand-cranked radio, and NOAA weather radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both.
- D. Flashlight and extra batteries
- E. First aid kit.
- F. **Steel** whistle with lanyard to signal for help. Plastic can break.
- G. Dust mask, duct tape, and a tarp and/or plastic sheeting for shelter.
- H. Personal wipes, cleaning wipes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation.
- I. Local maps or, if you have one, a hand held GPS system.
- J. Coins for a payphone and cash. ATM machines will probably be down. Bills should be ones, fives, and tens. No one will have change for large bills.
- K. Waterproof matches.
- L. Hard-sole shoes and a change of clothing, including something with long sleeves and a waterproof jacket.
- M. Small container of household bleach. Sixteen drops of bleach to one gallon water will treat water. This is regular bleach with no fragrance added. Otherwise, use treated bleach.
- N. Utility knife and rope. Paper and a pen or pencil.
- O. Books, games, puzzles, ipods, and other activities to help relieve stress.

You may add additional items in your bucket that are unique to the needs of you and your family. These items listed above may be purchased at your local stores. When shopping for foods, pick up an extra item. Shop at stores that sell camping items. Check out yard sales and thrift stores.



TN Commission on Aging and Disability, Authorization No. 316116, No. of copies, 3,000. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.09 per copy. 04/12