

IT'S A DISASTER!

...and what are YOU
gonna do about it?

5th Edition

A Disaster Preparedness, Prevention
& Basic First Aid Manual

by Bill & Janet Liebsch

We wanted to share some creative ideas associated with our customizable book that may benefit you and your community. *(Note: This PDF is only a portion of the 266-pg book, but allows you to see layout, contents, etc.)*



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Learn more about our products and funding ideas at www.fedhealth.net or contact me direct to discuss your needs.

As always ... we're completely open to ANY idea that gets this data into the publics' hands and benefits our country and our nation's heroes.

Stay safe,

Bill Liebsch
President & CEO
Fedhealth

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Proceeds benefit the U.S. First
Responders Association
www.usfra.org

Funding ideas for volunteers + others

The coronavirus outbreak has financially impacted agencies and groups across the country – esp. volunteer fire depts and other support teams since much of their annual budgets come from community fundraisers like raffles, dinners, fairs and other functions.



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Proceeds benefit the [U.S. First Responders Association](http://www.fedhealth.net)

USFRA Family Preparedness books/ebooks

[Fedhealth](#) and the U.S. First Responders Association invite you to join us in preparedness projects that benefit first responders, military and veterans.

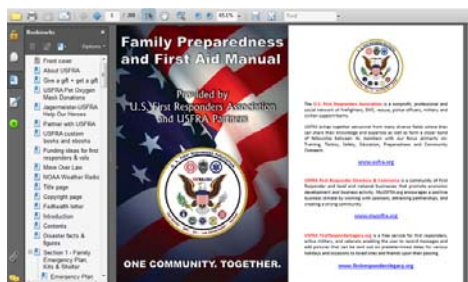
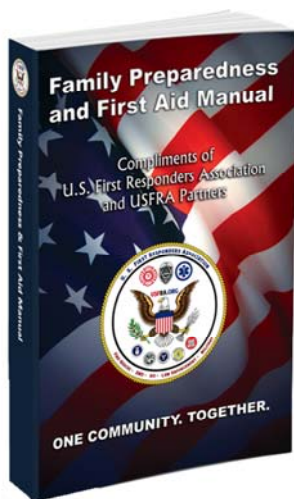
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When possible, grants or ads and sponsors will pay for books and ebooks, but Fedhealth can work with agencies using grant or budgeted public education funds, as well as businesses and groups interested in sponsoring purchases for communities or events.

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Custom bulk PDF ebooks start at \$5 each and go as low as **\$2** each and can be distributed using special links or codes. Plus proceeds of **all** projects benefit USFRA in support of America's Fire/EMS, Law Enforcement, 911/Dispatch, Military and Veterans.

Learn more at www.usfra.org/fedhealth or call **520.907.2153**



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DEDICATION

*This manual is dedicated to Volunteers all around the world who give their heart, soul, energy, and time unselfishly for the betterment of our society.
Thank you.*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bill and Janet Liebsch are the founders of Fedhealth, a publishing and marketing company formed in 1999 to help the public focus on preparedness and health-related issues. They are dedicated to developing and marketing collaborative programs that primarily benefit first responders and volunteers. Fedhealth's books and ebooks are continually updated on preparedness and safety-related topics. To order additional copies and to learn about some funding ideas visit www.fedhealth.net

DISCLAIMER

The authors of this Manual are not licensed physicians, and the enclosed suggestions should not replace the advice of trained medical staff and officials. This information is not intended as a substitute for a first aid course, but reviews basic first aid measures that could be used when professional medical assistance is delayed or temporarily unavailable due to a major disaster or crisis. All data compiled here is for informational purposes only and neither the authors nor Fedhealth can accept responsibility for any injury, loss or damage arising from the use of this information. During a time of crisis, citizens should heed the advice of local officials over the data contained in this book.

INTRODUCTION

If you have never been involved in any type of major disaster, count yourself among the lucky ones and realize that emergencies and disasters can happen anywhere and anytime.

The confusion immediately following a disaster is scary - especially if you have not prepared yourself in advance and discussed these ideas with your family members.

Hopefully every time you see or hear about a disaster it makes you stop and think... "What if that was me or my family?" But what have YOU done to get yourself and your family ready? The best thing you can do to deal with any type of emergency situation is...

BE AWARE... BE PREPARED... and... HAVE A PLAN!

If you do these 3 things, the life you save could be your own... because what you don't know CAN hurt you!

The more the public is prepared for a disaster, the less strain we place on our local emergency services. Any major disaster will temporarily swamp First Responders, therefore, both the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency recommend persons to try to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours following a disaster. And if you are prepared for a longer period (like 2 to 4 weeks or more)... that's even better!

A majority of this information was compiled from various publications and data provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, Public Safety Canada, the CDC, the Public Health Agency of Canada and others to help assist you in preparing for various types of disasters and basic first aid. It also offers suggestions on personal checklists and important telephone numbers for your family members and emergency groups that can be written in the spaces provided or attached inside this manual. Most importantly, there are many web sites throughout the book to help you find more information.

We realize you may not experience every type of disaster in your part of the world, but if you ever travel you could potentially be placed in a disaster situation so please educate yourself and your family.

Please stop your hectic lives for just a few hours and sit down with your entire family (from children to seniors) to read this manual and discuss how each of you would handle these types of situations.

It will be quality time with your loved ones and could save your lives!

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FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN CHECKLIST

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act and local first responders may not be able to reach you right away. **PREPARE NOW** for a sudden emergency and discuss these ideas with your entire family to create a **Family Emergency Plan**.

Even though this checklist looks long and scary, it is easy to do and can help you make a plan. We suggest you and your family review this list, then read through the Manual since there are many tips mentioned in various topics and Sections that could help develop your plan.

PLEASE make some time in your busy lives to prepare for a disaster... a few minutes now could possibly save a life when a disaster hits. Remember - **be aware... be prepared... and have a plan!**

LEARN ABOUT RISKS & EXISTING PLANS:

- [] Find out which disasters could occur in your area and ask local officials how to prepare for each disaster, but read this Manual first.
- [] Ask how you will be warned of an emergency.
- [] Learn your community's evacuation routes and map them out using a free service like Google Maps or Mapquest.
- [] Ask about special assistance for elderly or disabled persons.
- [] Ask your workplace about emergency plans and learn about plans at your children's school(s) or day care center(s).

TIPS ON MAKING YOUR FAMILY PLAN:

*(Review all and complete **Family Emergency Plan** on pages 12-13):*

- [] Meet with household members to talk about the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes and other emergencies. Explain how to respond to each using the tips in this Manual.
- [] Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster that affects your community. *(see Section 2 for explanations of each disaster)*
- [] Talk about what to do when there are power outages and injuries.
- [] Take a basic first aid and CPR class (or join a CERT - see page 221).

- [] Draw a floor plan of your home showing doors, windows and stairways. Mark locations of first aid and disaster kits, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, ladders, and utility shut-off points. Next, use a colored pen to draw a broken line charting at least 2 escape routes from each room. And practice drills!
- [] Show family members how to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches when necessary.
- [] Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones and teach children how and when to call 9-1-1. (*see Section 3*)
- [] Make sure household members understand they should turn on the radio for emergency information.
- [] Pick one out-of-state and a local friend or relative for family members to call if separated during a disaster. (It is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area.)
- [] Pick two emergency meeting places in case you can't go home: 1) A place near your home. 2) A place outside the neighborhood.
- [] Teach children meeting places and emergency phone numbers in case you get separated during a crisis.
- [] Put **ICE** before a name and number in cell phone address books so First Responders would know who to call "**In Case of Emergency**".
- [] Make sure family members know how to send and receive photos and text messages (if you have those capabilities on your cells). Also consider joining a network like Twitter or a local text message alert system to receive emergency broadcast warnings, updates, etc.
- [] Get some FRS walkie-talkies and teach family how to use them.
- [] Practice emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least two times each year.
- [] Consider doing a Living Will and/or a Healthcare Power of Attorney.
- [] Keep family records in a water- and fire-proof container. Consider keeping another set of records in a safety deposit box offsite or on the cloud realizing data might not be accessible during a disaster.
- [] Check if you have enough insurance coverage. (*see Section 2 for more information on flood insurance.*)

TIPS FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED FAMILY MEMBERS:

- [] Ask about special aid that may be available in an emergency for elderly and disabled family members. Find out if assistance is available for evacuation and in public shelters. FEMA suggests people with a disability register with local fire department so help can be provided quickly in an emergency (if available in your area).
- [] Ask your children's teachers and caregivers about emergency plans for schools, day care centers or nursing homes.
- [] If you currently have a personal care attendant from an agency, check to see if the agency will be providing services at another location if there is an evacuation -- and tell family members.
- [] Learn what to do and where to go for each type of emergency. For example, basements are not wheelchair-accessible so you should have alternate safe places for different types of disasters for disabled or elderly persons.
- [] Learn what to do in case of power outages and injuries. Know how to start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment!
- [] If someone in the home uses a wheelchair, make sure 2 exits are wheelchair-accessible in case one exit is blocked.
- [] Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you have trouble getting around.
- [] Both elderly and disabled persons should wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace at all times if they have special needs.
- [] Talk to your doctor to ask if you can keep a 60-90 day supply of medications and special medical parts and supplies on-hand in case of emergency.
- [] Consider setting up a "Buddy" system with a roommate, trusted friend or neighbor. Give buddy a copy of your **Family Emergency Plan** and an extra house key or tell them where one is available.
- [] Consider putting a few personal items in a lightweight draw string bag (e.g. a whistle, some medications, a small flashlight, extra hearing aid batteries, etc.) and tie it to your wheelchair or walker for emergencies. Make sure to rotate items so current and working.
- [] Visit the **National Organization on Disability** web site to learn more about Emergency Preparedness issues at www.nod.org .

TIPS FOR PETS OR LIVESTOCK / LARGE ANIMALS:

TIPS FOR PETS

- [] If you have to evacuate your home, DO NOT leave pets behind! Make sure you take a secure pet carrier, leash or harness with you.
- [] Emergency shelters may not accept pets (unless it is a service animal). Find out which motels and hotels in your area allow pets in advance of needing them. Ask your veterinarian or animal shelter if they board animals during a disaster or emergency.
- [] Make sure identification tags are current and securely fastened to pet's collar or get a microchip implanted in your pet. Keep a current photo in your wallet or cell phone for identification purposes.
- [] Make sure a roommate, trusted neighbor or friend has an extra house key to evacuate your pets in the event you are unavailable.

TIPS FOR LIVESTOCK / LARGE ANIMALS

- [] Evacuate livestock whenever possible. Make arrangements for evacuation, including routes and host sites, in advance. At least two alternate evacuation routes should be mapped out as a backup.
- [] The evacuation site should have food, water, veterinary care, handlers, equipment and proper facilities.
- [] Trucks, trailers, and vehicles for transporting animals should be available with experienced handlers and drivers to transport them.
- [] If evacuation is not possible, a decision must be made whether to move large animals to available shelter or turn them outside. This decision should be based on the type of disaster and the soundness and location of the shelter or structure.
- [] If you board animals, ask if facility has an evacuation plan in place.

Next, we suggest you sit with your family and write down your **Family Emergency Plan** using the next 2 pages as a guide. Then review how to put together a **Disaster Supplies Kit** since you may not have much time if you are told to evacuate quickly.

Again, we suggest you and family members read this manual together - especially your kids - since there are many tips here that could help you make a plan and learn what to do if the unexpected happens. You may just want to review the book first and then come back to this Section later.

FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

(Post a copy of this information near phone and in kits for easy access.)

Emergency Numbers

In a life-threatening emergency, **call 9-1-1** or local emergency number:

Police Department: _____

Fire Department: _____

Ambulance: _____

Hospital: _____

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 (U.S. only) _____

Out-of-State Contact

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

Local Contact

Name _____

Telephone (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

Family & Friends Work / Cell Numbers

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Neighbors

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

School Information (if you have children)

Child / School Name: _____ / _____ Ph#: _____

Child / School Name: _____ / _____ Ph#: _____

Child / School Name: _____ / _____ Ph#: _____

Family Doctors

Name: _____ Phone#: _____
Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Medical Allergies

Name: _____ Allergy: _____
Name: _____ Allergy: _____

Current Prescriptions

Name: _____ Medication: _____
Name: _____ Medication: _____

Other

Dentist: _____ Phone#: _____
Veterinarian: _____ Phone#: _____

Electric company: _____
Gas company: _____
Water company: _____

EMERGENCY MEETING PLACES (OR AREAS)

In case you get separated during an emergency or disaster, decide on two Meeting Places or Areas where you can join each other. Include children in this decision so they understand why they should meet here.

1. Near your home (within 1 mile of your house) _____

2. Away from your home (at least 5 miles from your house) _____

Note: If these meeting places cannot be reached, text or send pictures of a new location or a landmark you are near so others can find you.

DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere -- and, when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. And sometimes services may be cut off or first responders can't reach people right away. Would you and your family be prepared to cope until help arrives?

Both FEMA and the Red Cross recommend keeping enough supplies in your home to meet your family's needs for at *least* three days (we suggest 2 to 4 weeks or more in home.) Once disaster threatens or hits, you may not have time to shop or search for supplies ... but, if you've gathered supplies in advance in your **Disaster Supplies Kit**, your family could handle an evacuation or shelter living easier. And since everything is all together in one place... all you gotta do is **GRAB & GO!**

Put items you'd most likely need (water, food, first aid, emergency items, etc.) in a container that is easy-to-carry and that will fit in your vehicle. For example, a large trash can or storage container with a lid that snaps shut tightly (some even come with wheels), or a waterproof backpack or large duffel bag (waterproof, if possible) would be useful.

We're also including suggestions for a **CAR KIT** and a **CLASSROOM / LOCKER / OFFICE KIT** since these are usually the most common places you would be if and when a disaster strikes.

There are seven basic categories of supplies you should stock in your home kit: **water, food, first aid supplies, tools and emergency supplies, sanitation, clothing and bedding, and special items.**

Take advantage of sales and stock up as you can -- also put dates on food cans or labels to show when they were purchased. Supplies should ALL be checked every 6 months to make sure they are still good and working! We suggest you mark dates on your calendar and have the entire family help check all the items together. It'll be good quality time with the family and give you all a chance to update any phone numbers or information that has changed.

WATER

A normally active person needs to drink at least 2 quarts (2 litres) of water each day and possibly as much as a gallon (4 litres) a day.

[] Store one gallon of water per person per day (two quarts/litres for drinking and two quarts/litres for food preparation and sanitation).

- [] Keep at least a 3 day supply of water (or more) for each person in home and store extra water for pets. Rotate new cases / bottles every 6 months. Consider getting large 55-gallon drums or containers for long-term water storage from a reputable dealer and treat the water.
- [] Consider purchasing a certified portable water purification filter.
- [] Review TIPS ON WATER PURIFICATION at end of Section 2.

FOOD

Choose foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno or a small propane camping stove. Select foods that are compact and lightweight and rotate food out every 6 months. (Keep items like this handy in pantry too.)

- [] Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, and vegetables (and put in a manual can opener!!) Make sure cans don't have dents in them.
- [] Canned juices, milk, soups (if powder or cubes, store extra water)
- [] Staples - sugar, salt, pepper
- [] High energy foods - peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix, nuts, jerky, dried fruits, Emergency Food bars, etc.
- [] Vitamins & herbs (e.g. a good multiple, Vitamins C & E, garlic pills [boosts immune], L-Tyrosine [an amino acid for stress], etc.)
- [] Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets
- [] Foods for your pet (if necessary)
- [] Comfort / stress foods - cookies, hard candy, suckers, sweetened cereal, instant coffee, tea bags, powdered drink mixes, etc.
- [] Some companies offer survival and long-term storage foods that are freeze dried and sold in months, 1-year, and 2-year supplies

FIRST AID KITS

You should always be prepared and keep a First Aid Kit in your home and in every vehicle and make sure everyone knows where kits are and how to use them. And if you like the outdoors (hiking, biking, etc.) you should carry a small Kit in your fanny pack or backpack as a precaution.

There are many different sizes of First Aid Kits on the market that vary in price. You can also make your own kits using things that may already be in your home. Consider including the following items in a **waterproof** container or bag so you can be prepared for almost any type of emergency.

We realize there are a lot of items suggested here, but the more you prepare ... the better off you and your family will be during a disaster situation.

ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT

- Ace bandage(s)
- Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Adhesive tape
- Antibiotic ointment or gel
- Antiseptic towelettes
- Assorted sizes of safety pins & needles
- Box of Baking soda
- Cleansing agent (isopropyl alcohol, hydrogen peroxide and/or soap)
- Cold & Heat packs
- Contact lens solution and Eyewash solution
- Cotton and Cotton swabs
- Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- Dental repair kit (usually near toothpaste section)
- Disposable Face shield for Rescue Breathing
- Disposable gloves
- Face masks (standard & N95 rated particulate filter and/or Nanomasks)
- Flashlight & batteries - check often to make sure it works & batteries are good (Tip: remove batteries while stored or get hand crank units)
- Gauze pads
- Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol)
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Lip balm (one with SPF is best)
- Liquid bandage (to seal cuts or scrapes)
- Moleskin (for blisters on feet)
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Plastic bags
- Roller gauze
- Scissors
- Small bottle of hand lotion
- Snake bite kit with extractor
- Sunscreen (one with SPF 30 or higher and 3 or 4 star UVA protection)
- Thermometer
- Tweezers

NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT

- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

- Antacid (for upset stomach)
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antihistamine and decongestant (for allergic reactions or allergies and sinus problems)
- Aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen sodium
- Laxative
- Potassium Iodide (*see NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCY*)
- Vitamins & herbs (e.g. a good multiple, Vitamins C & E, garlic pills or zinc [boosts immune sys], L-Tyrosine [amino acid for stress], etc.)

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT

Since it may be hard to get prescriptions filled during a disaster, talk to your physician or pharmacist about storing these types of medications. Keep a 3-month supply of medications and supplies on-hand if at all possible. And make sure to check labels for special instructions and expiration dates.

TIPS ON SOME INEXPENSIVE FIRST AID ITEMS

Activated charcoal - absorbs poisons and drugs in the stomach and intestines and helps prevent toxins from being absorbed into the bloodstream by coating intestinal walls. (Check with the Poison Control Center before taking since it doesn't work on all toxic substances.) It's found at natural foods stores and pharmacies in powder, liquid, and capsule forms. Capsules can be broken open to use powder for making a paste on insect bites and stings.

Baking soda - aid for heartburn or indigestion; use as substitute for toothpaste; sprinkle in bath water for sore muscles or bites & stings; or make a paste (3 parts baking soda to 1 part water) to use on stings or insect bites, poison ivy, canker sores, sunburn, and rashes (but too strong for infants!)

Hydrogen peroxide - can help clean and disinfect wounds, treat canker sores, gingivitis, and minor earaches. Also can be used for cleaning hands or for brushing teeth. (The reason it foams up on skin or item is because of the oxygen at work - means it's killing germs!)

Meat tenderizer - (check ingredient list on bottle for "papain") make a paste to use on insect bites and stings. Papain is a natural enzyme derived from papaya that can help break down insect venom.

Vinegar - helps relieve jellyfish stings, sunburn, and swimmer's ear.

TOOLS AND EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

The following items may come in handy if you have to evacuate or if stuck at home short or long-term.

- [] Aluminum foil and resealable plastic bags
- [] Battery-operated radio and extra batteries (remember to check batteries every 6 months). Also consider radios like the NOAA Weather Radio and Environment Canada's Weatheradio with one-alert feature that automatically alerts you when a Watch or Warning has been issued. Or get a hand crank radio with flashlight.
- [] Battery-operated travel alarm clock
- [] Cash or traveler's check and some change
- [] CD (could be used as a reflector to signal planes if stranded)
- [] Compass
- [] Extra copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [] Flashlight & headlamp plus extra batteries & bulbs (check every 6 months) and/or get solar, hand crank or shake flashlights / lanterns
- [] Fire extinguisher: small canister, ABC type
- [] Generator (learn how to use and store it in advance)
- [] Manual can opener and a utility knife
- [] Map of the area (to help locate shelters, alternate routes, etc.)
- [] Matches, lighters, flint and candles in a waterproof container
- [] Medicine dropper (e.g. measure bleach to purify water, etc.)
- [] Needles & thread
- [] Paper, pencil (store in baggies to keep dry)
- [] Paper or plastic cups & plates, utensils, a few pots & pans
- [] Plastic sheeting (for shelter, lean-to, or sealing room during chemical / hazardous material threat - see *HAZARDOUS MATERIALS*)
- [] Power inverter
- [] Radiation detection devices (like a dosimeter, etc. - see page 112)
- [] Tape (plastic & duct), rope, twine, paracord and bungee cords

- [] Signal flares
- [] Small hand tools (pliers, screwdrivers, shovel or trowel, etc.)
- [] Solar (or handcrank) charger for cell phone, tablets, etc.
- [] Sterno, small camp stove and propane bottle(s) and/or solar oven
- [] Walkie-talkies (low cost set of FRS radios and store extra batteries)
- [] Whistle (can be used to call for help in an emergency)
- [] Wrench (to turn off household gas and water)

SANITATION

Make sure all these items are in a waterproof containers or plastic bags.

- [] Disinfectant (*see TIPS ON SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE*)
- [] Feminine supplies (tampons, pads, etc.)
- [] Household chlorine bleach (regular scent), disinfectant spray/wipes
- [] Personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, toothpaste or baking soda, brush, comb, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, etc.)
- [] Plastic garbage bags with twist ties and small plastic grocery bags
- [] Plastic bucket with tight lid (for human waste) or waste kits, WAG Bags, Poo powder, Poo~Pourri, etc.
- [] Soap, liquid detergent, hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol), moist towelettes or sanitizing wipes, hydrogen peroxide, etc.
- [] Toilet paper, baby wipes and paper towels
- [] Wash cloths, hand and bath towels, dish rags & towels, etc.

CLOTHING AND BEDDING

- [] At least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person
- [] Sturdy shoes or work boots and extra socks

- [] Hats, work and regular gloves, and thermal underwear
- [] Blankets or sleeping bags (small emergency ones are cheap and about the size of a wallet ... or pack extra garbage bags)
- [] Rain gear or poncho (or use plastic garbage bags)
- [] Safety glasses and/or Sunglasses
- [] Small stuffed animal, toy or book for each child at bedtime

SPECIAL ITEMS

- [] Entertainment - games, books and playing cards
- [] Important Family Documents - keep in a waterproof, portable safe container or scan to flash drive or use a secure online backup service. Also keep copies of papers off-site in a safety deposit box or with a family member.
 - Extra set of car keys, cash, traveler's checks and credit card
 - Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
 - Passports, social security #s/cards, immunization records
 - Bank account and Credit card numbers + phone numbers
 - Inventory of valuable household goods
 - Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates, photo IDs)
 - Recent pictures of all family members and pets for i.d. needs
- [] RED and GREEN construction paper or RED and GREEN crayons or markers (can signal rescue workers to stop or move on)

Remember to pack things for family members with special needs:

For Infants

- [] Bottles, Formula, powdered milk, cereals and juices
- [] Diapers, baby wipes and diaper rash ointment
- [] Medications
- [] Small soft toys

For Elderly and Disabled (Children & Adults)

- [] Bladder control garments and pads

- [] Denture needs
- [] Extra eye glasses or contact lenses and supplies
- [] Extra hearing aid batteries
- [] Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters or special equipment
- [] A list of style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemaker, defibrillator, etc. and copy of Medicare card
- [] List of prescription medications and dosages or allergies (if any)
- [] Special medicines for heart, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.
- [] Store backup equipment (such as a manual wheelchair, cane or walker) at a neighbor's home or at another location

For Pets

- [] Cage or carrier, bedding, leash, muzzle, litter & box, trash bags, etc.
- [] Food, manual can opener, bowls, chew toys or treats, etc.
- [] Medications and copies of medical / immunization records

CAR KIT

Keep most or all of these items in a waterproof pack so everything is together and easy to grab. Make one for each vehicle too!

- [] Battery or crank radio, flashlight/headlamp, extra batteries & bulbs
- [] Blanket (small emergency ones are cheap and the size of a wallet)
- [] Bottled water and non-perishable foods (Tip: store food in empty coffee cans to keep it from getting squashed)
- [] CD (could be used as a reflector to signal planes if stranded)
- [] Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [] Extra clothes (jeans and sweater), sturdy shoes and socks
- [] First Aid Kit (with disposable gloves and N95 rated face masks)
- [] Local maps with evacuation routes pre-marked

- [] Personal hygiene items (hand sanitizer, toilet paper, tissues, tampons, etc.)
- [] Plastic bags that seal
- [] Shovel (small collapsible ones are available)
- [] Short rubber hose (for siphoning)
- [] Small fire extinguisher (5 lb., ABC type)
- [] Tools - Tire repair kit, booster cables, flares, screw drivers, pliers, knife, wire or rope, etc.
- [] Work gloves

CLASSROOM / LOCKER / OFFICE KIT

Keep items in a small pack, drawstring bag or duffel so everything is together and easy to grab!

- [] Battery-operated radio and extra batteries (or a hand crank radio)
- [] Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [] Emergency blanket (small, cheap, & light - the size of a wallet)
- [] A few plastic trash bags with twist ties
- [] Mini flashlight, bulbs and batteries, or headlamp or hand crank unit
- [] Non-perishable foods like crackers, cookies, trail mix, granola bars, etc. (Ask children to help choosing food and make sure they understand this is for Emergencies!)
- [] Personal hygiene items (packet of tissues, moist towelettes, hand sanitizer, comb, toothbrush, tampons, etc.)
- [] Small First Aid kit (with disposable gloves and N95 face masks)
- [] Small stuffed animal, book, or toy (for children)
- [] Sweatshirt or sweater (or a full change of clothes if enough room)
- [] Walkie-talkies (low cost set of FRS radios and store extra batteries)

[] Water ... as much as you can fit! Small juice boxes are good too.

[] Work gloves to protect your hands (especially from broken glass)

SUGGESTIONS & REMINDERS ABOUT KITS

Remember, both the Red Cross and FEMA recommend keeping enough supplies to meet your family's needs for at *least* three days, but consider a longer period like 96 hours or 2 weeks or more.

You may not have time to shop or search for items once a disaster threatens or hits so make your kits now so you're prepared for the unexpected.

Some things to keep in mind include ...

- Store your **Disaster Supplies Kit** in convenient place known to ALL family members. Keep a smaller version in the trunk or back of every vehicle (see CAR KIT).
- Keep items in airtight plastic bags to keep them dry in kit.
- Take advantage of end-of-season clearance sales and grocery sales (esp. can goods) and stock up as you can. Look around your home since you may be able to put a lot of these things together from what is already on shelves or in drawers or medicine cabinets.
- Replace your stored food and water supply every 6 months. It's best to test or replace batteries at this time too. Make a game of it by keeping track on a calendar or on a poster drawn by children so they can help. Also, everyone should meet every 6 months anyway to go over the **Family Emergency Plan** and update any data (phone numbers, address changes, etc.) *Suggestion: Do this every Daylight Savings time - it's twice a year on a weekend so easy to remember.*
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medicines.
- Visit the U.S. Department of Homeland Security web site for more tips about Kits at www.ready.gov

What are YOU gonna do about... AN EVACUATION?

Evacuations are quite common and happen for a number of reasons – fires, floods, mudflows, hurricanes, or chemical spills on the roads or railways.

When community evacuations become necessary, local officials provide information to the public usually through the media. Government agencies, the Salvation Army, Red Cross, churches and other relief organizations provide emergency shelter and supplies. But, as we have said before, you should have enough food, water, clothing and emergency supplies for days or weeks (or more) in case you cannot be reached by relief efforts.

The amount of time to evacuate obviously depends on the type of disaster. Hurricanes can be tracked and allow a day or two notice to get ready, but many types of disasters happen without much notice... so prepare NOW!!

BEFORE AN EVACUATION:

Ask & learn - Ask emergency management officials about community evacuation plans and learn the routes that should be used. Also learn the signs used for your area - and, if you're traveling, make a mental note what evacuation signs look like in case something happens while on the road. And ask if your local officials have developed pet-friendly shelters and pet-related disaster plans through the 2006 PETS Act.

Make a plan - Review Section 1 and develop a **Family Emergency Plan** (so you know where to meet if separated, how to contact everyone, have a **Disaster Supplies Kit** ready to go, etc.) If you don't have a car, make arrangements with friends, neighbors or local officials so you have a way to evacuate.

Think about your pets - Make a plan for your critters. Review Tips for Pets or Livestock / Large Animals on page 11 and pack supplies for them in your **Disaster Supplies Kit**.

Where do we go? - Talk with your family members and decide in advance where you would go in case you can't return home for weeks or months. If your home is damaged or destroyed or you're forced to leave your home due to on-going threats (like mudslides or flooding), you will need to find temporary or permanent living quarters. This could mean staying in a public shelter or hotel, living with friends or relatives, or renting a home or apartment in the middle of all the chaos, so discuss several options. Then, write down your various options and share them with relatives and friends.

Paperwork & money - As discussed in Section 1, put important paperwork (wills, photo I.D.s, insurance policies, list of bank and credit card numbers, etc.) in a portable fireproof container (and have copies in an off-site safety deposit box) so you have identification to get access to your bank or to set up new accounts if you have to relocate long-term to another town. Also keep copies on a CD, flash drive or external drive and store media in a safe place off-site or in a locked fireproof container. Or consider using a service that allows you to upload scans and securely store your documents on their servers.

Fill 'er up - Keep car fueled up -- stations may close during an emergency. (Try to stay in the habit of having at least half a tank of gas at all times.)

Learn to shut off - Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas and water at main switches and valves -- ask local utilities for instructions (and keep a wrench handy).

Review tips on basic needs - Please review TIPS ON SHELTER LIVING, TIPS ON USING HOUSEHOLD FOODS, TIPS ON WATER PURIFICATION and TIPS ON SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE near end of this section to prepare yourself and family for what to expect.

DURING AN EVACUATION:

Listen - Keep up on news reports for the latest information.

Grab & Go - Grab your **Disaster Supplies Kit** (has water, food, clothing, emergency supplies, insurance and financial records, etc. ready to go).

What do I wear? - Put on protective clothing (long sleeve shirt and pants) and sturdy shoes - may even want to grab a jacket, hat or cap.

Shut off utilities - Turn off main water valve and electricity (if authorities tell you to do so).

Secure home - Close and lock doors and windows, unplug appliances, protect water pipes (if freezing weather), tie down boats, etc. (*See specific types of disaster for additional tips on securing home.*)

Take quick pics - Use your camera phone to take some shots of your home and property for a last minute inventory of things.

Pets - Make sure you take pets in secure carriers and bring food, water and leashes or harnesses with you. Grab medical records so you can prove immunizations are current. Realize some shelters may not accept pets so have a backup plan on where you'll go. If you have no alternative but to leave your pet at home, confine it to a safe area inside with dry food and

plenty of water. Leave bathroom door open and toilet lid up (or remove lid completely) so they can access additional water (but only if toilet is free of chemicals.) If you must leave your pet outside -- don't chain it!

Large animals - Hopefully you made arrangements in advance to evacuate livestock and/or large animals. If you must turn them loose, prepare halters for horses that include your name and phone numbers or spray paint your number on the animals and leave lots of food and water out.

Alert family / friends - Let others know where you are going (or at least leave a message or note in clear view explaining where you can be found). If pets are left on the property, put a note on door to alert rescue workers.

Social media - Social networking sites allow users to stay current on evacuation and recovery efforts. You may not have access to the Internet during or after a crisis, but text messages can sometimes get through when cell and phone systems are down. The Salvation Army, Red Cross, FEMA, local emergency officials and other relief groups use social media to send instant messages about evacuations, shelter information, and other emergency broadcast warnings to stay updated on friends and families displaced by storms. Social media is also a great way to post and share photos and videos.

Things to avoid:

- **bad weather** - leave early enough so you're not trapped
- **shortcuts** - may be blocked -- stick to the recommended Evacuation routes
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines**

Review tips on basic needs - Make sure you review tips on SHELTER LIVING, USING HOUSEHOLD FOODS, WATER PURIFICATION and SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE at end of this section to prepare your family for the unexpected.

What are YOU gonna do about...

FIRES & WILDFIRES?

Since fire spreads so quickly, there is NO time to grab valuables or make a phone call! In just two minutes a fire can become life threatening! In five minutes a house can be engulfed in flames.

A fire's heat and smoke are more dangerous than the actual flames since you can burn your lungs by inhaling the super-hot air. Fire produces poisonous gases that make you drowsy and disoriented (confused). Instead of being awakened by a fire, you could fall into a deeper sleep.

First we will discuss **FIRES** like those you might encounter in your home or apartment. Then we will cover **WILDFIRES** since there are many things people need to think about when living near wilderness areas.

BEFORE A FIRE (FIRE SAFETY TIPS):

Install smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors! - Test alarms 1-4 times a month, replace batteries once a year, and get new units every 10 years.

Make a plan - Review Section 1 and create an Escape Plan that includes two escape routes from every room in the house, then walk through the routes with your entire family. Also...

- Make sure your windows are not nailed or painted shut.
- Make sure security bars on windows have a fire safety opening feature so they can be easily opened from the inside...and teach everyone how to open them!
- Teach everyone how to stay **LOW** to floor (air is safer).
- Pick a spot to meet after escaping fire (meeting place).

Clean up - Keep storage areas clean – don't stack up newspapers & trash.

Check power sources - Check electrical wiring and extension cords – don't overload cords or outlets. Make sure there are no exposed wires anywhere and make sure wiring doesn't touch home insulation.

Use caution - Never use gasoline or similar liquids indoors and never smoke around flammable liquids!

Check heat sources - Check furnaces, stoves, cracked or rusty furnace parts, and chimneys. Always be careful with space heaters and keep them at least 3 feet (1 m) away from flammable materials.

Know how to shut off power - Know where the circuit breaker box and gas valve are and how to turn them off, if necessary. (And always have a gas company rep turn on a main gas line.)

Install A-B-Cs and remember P-A-S-S - Install A-B-C fire extinguishers in the home since they work on all types of fires, and teach family members how to use them. Remember **P-A-S-S** = **P**ull the pin; **A**im at the base of the fire; **S**queeze the trigger; **S**weep side to side.

Call local fire - Ask local fire department if they will inspect your home or business for fire safety and prevention.

Teach kids - Explain to children that matches and lighters are **TOOLS**, not toys... and if they see someone playing with fire they should tell an adult right away! And teach them how to report a fire and when to call 9-1-1.

Prevent common fires - Pay attention when cooking & don't smoke in bed!

DURING A FIRE:

If only a small fire that's not spreading too fast ...

Try to put out...? - Use a fire extinguisher or water (unless it's an electrical or grease fire) ... and never try to put out a fire that's getting out of control!

- **electrical fire** - never use water... use a fire extinguisher approved for electrical fires
- **oil or grease fire in kitchen** - smother fire with baking soda or salt (or, if burning in pan or skillet, carefully put a lid over it – but don't try to carry pan outside!)

If fire is spreading ...

GET OUT - DO NOT take time to try to grab anything except your family members! Once outside, do NOT try to go back in (even for pets) – let the firemen do it! Ask a neighbor to call fire department if not already called.

GET DOWN - Stay low to the ground under smoke by crawling on your hands and knees or squat down and walk like a duck... but keep moving to find a way out!

Closed door - Using the back of your hand (not your palm) always feel the top of the door, doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame before you open a closed door!

- **if door is cool** - leave quickly, close door behind you and crawl to an exit
- **if door is hot** – DO NOT open it ... find another way out

No way out - If you can't find a way out of the room you're trapped in (door is hot and too high to jump) then hang a white or light-colored sheet, towel or shirt outside a window to alert firemen.

Use stairs - Never take the elevator during a fire ... always use stairs!

If YOU are on fire - If your clothes ever catch fire, **STOP** what you're doing, **DROP** to the ground, cover your face and **ROLL** until the fire goes out. Running only makes the fire burn faster!

Toxic gas - Plastics in household goods create deadly fumes when burned.

AFTER A FIRE:

Don't go in there - Never enter a fire-damaged building until officials say it's okay and watch for signs of smoke in case the fire isn't totally out. Even if a fire's out, hydrogen cyanide and other toxic fumes can remain.

Utilities - Have an electrician check your household wiring before you turn the power back on and DO NOT try to reconnect any utilities yourself!

Damage - Look for structural damage (roof, walls, floors, etc.) since they may be weak.

Call for help - Local disaster relief service (Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.) can help provide shelter, food, or personal items that were destroyed.

Insurance - Call your insurance agent or representative and...

- Keep receipts of all clean-up and repair costs (for both insurance and income taxes).
- Do not throw away any damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken by your insurance company.

If you rent - Contact your landlord since it is the owner's responsibility to prevent further loss or damage to the site.

Move your stuff - Secure your personal belongings or move them to another location, if possible.

Recovery tips - Review TIPS ON RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER at end of this Section.

To learn more about fire safety and fire prevention visit the U.S. Fire Administration's web site www.usfa.fema.gov or contact your local fire department, emergency official, or your insurance agent / representative.

Wildfires are intense fires that are usually caused by careless humans or lightning. Campfires, children playing with matches or lighters, and cigarettes are the most common things that cause brush fires or wildfires so please be careful when you're out in deserts, mountains, or any other heavy vegetation areas. And please don't toss cigarettes out when driving!

NEVER leave a campfire burning – make sure it is completely out using plenty of water before leaving the area. Stir the coals around with a stick or log while pouring water over them to ensure all the coals get wet and they are no longer hot. Any hot coals left unattended can be easily ignited by wind since they can stay hot for 24-48 hours.

When building a campfire, always choose a level site, clear away any branches and twigs several feet from the fire, and never build a fire beneath tree branches or on surface roots. Also, build at least 10 feet (3 m) from any large rocks that could be blackened by smoke or cracked from a fire's heat.

See your local Forest Service office or Ranger Station for more information on campfires and permits. Or visit www.fs.usda.gov or www.pc.gc.ca

BEFORE A WILDFIRE (FIRE SAFETY TIPS):

Prepare - See WILDFIRE MITIGATION at beginning of this Section, and find more tips about **Ready, Set, Go!** program at www.wildlandfirersg.org.

Learn fire laws - Ask fire authorities or the forestry office for information on fire laws (like techniques, safest times to burn in your area, etc.)

Could they find & reach you? - Make sure that fire vehicles can get to your property and that your address is clearly marked.

Safety zone - Create a 30-100 foot (9-30 m) safety zone around your home. (see *WILDFIRE MITIGATION*)

Teach kids - Explain to children that matches and lighters are TOOLS, not toys... and if they see someone playing with fire tell an adult right away. And teach kids how to report a fire and when to call 9-1-1.

Tell authorities - Report hazardous conditions that could cause a wildfire.

Be ready to evacuate - Listen to local authorities and GO if you are told to evacuate. (see *EVACUATION*)

DURING A WILDFIRE:

Listen - Have a radio to keep up on news, weather and evacuation routes.

Evacuate? – If you are told to leave, do so ... and **IF** you have time also...

- Secure your home - close windows, vents, all doors, etc.
- Turn off utilities and tanks at main switches or valves.
- Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.
- See WILDFIRE MITIGATION at front of this section.

Head downhill – Fire climbs uphill 16 times faster than on level terrain (since heat rises) so always head down when evacuating the area.

Food & water - If you prepared ahead, you'll have your **Disaster Supplies Kit** handy to **GRAB & GO**. If not, gather up enough food and water for each family member for at least 3 days or longer!

Be understanding - Please realize the firefighters main objective is getting wildfires under control and they may not be able to save every home. Try to understand and respect the firefighters' and local officials' decisions.

AFTER A WILDFIRE:

Don't go there - Never enter fire-damaged areas until authorities say it's okay and watch for signs of smoke or heat in case the fire isn't totally out.

Critters - Don't try to care for a wounded critter – call Animal Control.

Utilities - Have an electrician check your household wiring before you turn the power back on and **DO NOT** try to reconnect any utilities yourself!

Damage - Look for structural damage – roof, walls & floors may be weak.

Call for help - Local disaster relief services (Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.) can help provide shelter, food, or personal items that were destroyed.

Insurance - Call your insurance agent or representative and...

- Keep receipts of all clean-up and repair costs
- Do not throw away any damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken by your insurance company.

If you rent - Contact your landlord since it is the owner's responsibility to prevent further loss or damage to the site.

Move your stuff - Secure belongings or move them to another location.

Recovery tips - See TIPS ON RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER.

What are YOU gonna do about...

A FLOOD?

Floods are the most common natural disaster. Some floods develop over a period of several days, but a flash flood can cause raging waters in just a few minutes. Mudflows are another danger triggered by flooding that can bury villages without warning, especially in mountainous regions.

Everyone is at risk from floods and flash floods, even in areas that seem harmless in dry weather. Always listen to the radio or TV to hear the latest updates. Some other types of radios are the NOAA Weather Radio and Environment Canada Weatheradio with battery backup and tone-alert feature that alert you when a Watch or Warning has been issued.

BEFORE A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):

Prepare - Review FLOOD MITIGATION at beginning of this Section.

Learn the buzzwords - Learn the terms / words used with floods...

- **Flood watch** - flooding is possible
- **Flash flood watch** - flash flooding is possible so move to higher ground if in a low-lying area
- **Flood warning** - flooding is occurring or will occur soon so listen to radio or TV for updates or evacuation alerts
- **Flash flood warning** - flash flood is occurring so seek higher ground on foot immediately
- **Urban and Small Stream Advisory** - flooding of small streams, streets and low-lying areas is occurring

Learn risks - Ask local emergency management office if your property is a flood-prone or high-risk area and what you can do to reduce risks to your property and home. Find out what official flood warning signals are and what to do when you hear them. Ask if there are dams or levees nearby and if they could be hazards. (*also see Landslides & Mudflows on pages 39-41.*)

Be ready to evacuate - Listen to local authorities and leave if you are told to evacuate. (*see EVACUATION*)

Make a plan - Review Section 1 to develop a **Family Emergency Plan** and **Disaster Supplies Kit**. And the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium has some resources on how to dry materials like artwork, books, photographs, etc. at www.iowaconserveandpreserve.org

Learn to shut off - Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas and water at main switches and valves -- and ask local utilities for instructions.

Get insurance...? - Talk to your agent and find out more about the **National Flood Insurance Program**. (see *FLOOD MITIGATION*)

Did you know...

- ... you can buy federal flood insurance through most major insurance companies and licensed agents?!
- ... you do not have to own a home to have flood insurance as long as your community participates in the **NFIP**?!
- ... **NFIP** offers coverage even in flood-prone areas and offers basement and below ground level coverage?!

Put it on film/chip/drive - Either videotape or take pictures of home and personal belongings and store them in a safe place with important papers.

DURING A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):

Be aware - Listen to local news and watch for flash floods especially if near streams, drainage channels, and areas known to flood. Be prepared to fill and place sandbags in areas as instructed to help combat rising waters.

Get to higher ground - If in a low-lying area, move to higher ground.

Prepare to evacuate – (see *EVACUATION*), and IF time also...

- Secure home and move important items to upper floors.
- Turn off utilities at main switches or valves if instructed by authorities and **DO NOT** touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water!
- Fill up your car with fuel.

Obey warnings - If road signs, barricades, or cones are placed in areas - **DO NOT** drive around them! Find another way or you may get fined.

Things to avoid:

- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) of moving water can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooding car** - if flood waters rise around your car, get out and move to higher ground if you can do it safely
- **bad weather** - leave early enough so you're not trapped
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous in floods!!

AFTER A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):

Things to avoid:

- **flood waters** - avoid since they may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage or may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines - local authorities will say when it's okay to return
- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous and report them to the power company

Obey warnings - If road signs, barricades, or cones are placed in areas - OBEY THEM! Most areas fine people who ignore posted warnings. DO NOT drive around barricades... find another way to get there!

Strange critters - Watch out for snakes and other wildlife in areas that were flooded. Don't try to care for a wounded critter since it may try to attack you... call your local animal control office or animal shelter.

Flooded food - Throw away food that has come into contact with flood waters since eating it can make you sick.

Drinking water - Wait for officials to advise when water is safe to drink. If you have a well that gets contaminated, find another source or boil water.

Wash your hands - Wash hands often with clean water and soap since flood waters are dirty and full of germs!

Use bleach - The best thing to use for cleaning up flooded areas is household bleach since it helps kill germs.

Sandbags - If any sandbags come into contact with floodwaters, wear rubber gloves when removing them and follow officials' instructions on where to discard them since they're most likely contaminated.

Listen - Continue listening to radio or TV for updates on weather and tips on getting assistance for housing, clothing, food, etc.

Insurance - Call your insurance agent or representative to discuss claims.

Mold - Consider asking a restoration professional to inspect your house for mold. (see *AIR QUALITY MITIGATION*)

Recovery tips - See TIPS ON RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER.

What are YOU gonna do about...

HURRICANES, CYCLONES & TYPHOONS?

Hurricane season in North America is generally between June and November. Hurricanes are tropical cyclones with torrential rains and winds of 74 - 155 miles per hour (120 - 250 km/h) or faster. These winds blow in a counter-clockwise direction (or clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere) around a center “eye”. The “eye” is usually 20 to 30 miles (32 to 48 km) wide, and the storm may be spread out as far as 400 miles (640 km)!

As the hurricane approaches the coast, a huge dome of water (called a storm surge) will crash into the coastline. Nine out of ten people killed in hurricanes are victims of storm surge. Hurricanes can also cause tornadoes, heavy rains and flooding.

What’s with all the different names?

You may have heard different words used to describe storms depending on where you live in the world. It’s a little confusing but hopefully this explains the various names.

Cyclone - an atmospheric disturbance with masses of air rapidly rotating around a low-pressure center... (sort of like a dust devil or a tornado)

Tropical Depression - maximum surface winds of less than 39 miles per hour (62 km/h) over tropical or sub-tropical waters with storms and circular winds

Tropical Storm - a tropical cyclone is labeled a Tropical Storm if winds are between 39-73 mph (62 - 117 km/h) and given a name to track it

Hurricane, Typhoon, Tropical cyclone - surface winds are higher than 74 mph (120 km/h)... and depending on where it is happening will determine what it is called

Where in the world do they use these names?

(Please note: We are only listing a few major countries or areas for each name.)

Cyclone - used in several parts of the world - **Indian Ocean, Australia, Africa, SW and southern Pacific Ocean**

Hurricane - used in North Atlantic Ocean, Northeast Pacific Ocean (east of the dateline), or South Pacific Ocean (east of 160) - **both coasts of North America, Puerto Rico, Caribbean Islands, and Central America**

Typhoon - used in Northwest Pacific Ocean west of the dateline - **Guam, Marshall Islands, Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong, coastal Asia**

Tropical cyclone - used in Southwest Pacific Ocean west of 160E or most of Indian Ocean - **Australia, Indonesia, Africa, Middle East**

Hurricanes are classed into five categories based on wind speeds, central pressure, and damage potential. The chart below is the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale with examples of damage provided by NOAA:

| Scale # (Category) | Sustained Winds | Wind Damage (examples of potential damage) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | 74-95 mph 119-153 km/h | Dangerous winds will produce some damage (Untied mobile homes, vegetation & signs) |
| 2 | 96-110 mph 154-177 km/h | Extremely dangerous winds/extensive damage (All mobile homes, roofs, small crafts, floods) |
| 3 | 111-129 mph 178-208 km/h | Devastating damage will occur (Small buildings, low-lying roads cut off) |
| 4 | 130-156 mph 209-251 km/h | Catastrophic damage will occur (Roofs and mobile homes destroyed, trees down, beach homes flooded) |
| 5 | > 156 mph > 251 km/h | Catastrophic damage will occur (Most bldgs and vegetation destroyed, major roads cut off, homes flooded) |

BEFORE A HURRICANE:

Prepare - Review FLOOD, LIGHTNING, POWER LOSS and WIND MITIGATION at beginning of this Section.

Learn the buzzwords - Learn the terms / words used with hurricanes...

- **Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch** - hurricane/tropical storm is possible within 48 hours so listen to TV and radio updates
- **Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning** - hurricane/tropical storm is expected within 36 hours -- may be told to evacuate (if so, do it) and listen to radio or TV for updates
- **Short term Watches and Warnings** - warnings provide detailed information on specific hurricane threats (like flash floods and tornadoes)
- **Storm surge** - large dome of water formed as the winds push water towards the shore. Surges can be up to 20 feet (6 meters) tall and 50 to 100 miles (80-160 km) wide.

- **Eye wall** - area that circles the eye of the storm and contains the most damaging winds and heaviest rains
- **Outer bands** - the outer rings or bands of thunderstorms that make landfall first

Listen - Keep local radio or TV tuned in for weather forecasts and updates. (Some other radios to consider are Environment Canada's Weatheradio and NOAA's Weather Radio with battery backup and tone-alert feature that automatically alert you when a Watch or Warning has been issued.)

Be ready to evacuate - Listen to local authorities and leave if you are told to evacuate. (see *EVACUATION*)

Pets & large animals - Make arrangements for pets since shelters may not allow them. If you have horses or livestock, make a plan for an alternate site in case they must be evacuated. (see *tips on page 11 and in EVACUATION*)

Make a plan - Review Section 1 to develop a **Family Emergency Plan** and **Disaster Supplies Kit**.

Learn to shut off - Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas and water at main switches and valves -- ask local utilities for instructions.

Batten down - Make plans to protect your property with storm shutters or board up windows with plywood that is measured to fit your windows. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking. (see *WIND MITIGATION*)

Get insurance...? - Talk to your agent and find out more about the **National Flood Insurance Program**. (see *FLOOD MITIGATION*)

Put it on film/chip/drive - Either videotape or take pictures of home and personal belongings and store them in a safe place (like a fireproof box or a safety deposit box or up in the cloud) along with important papers.

DURING A HURRICANE THREAT:

Listen - Have a battery-operated radio available to keep up on news reports, tornado warnings and evacuation routes.

Evacuate? – If you are told to leave - do it! (see *EVACUATION*) And if you have time also...

- Secure your home - close storm shutters or put up boards on windows, moor your boat, and secure outdoor objects or put them inside since winds will blow them around.
- Turn off utilities at main switches or valves, if instructed.

- Fill up your car with fuel.
- Make arrangements for pets in case you can't take them with you.

Food & water - If you prepared ahead, you'll have your **Disaster Supplies Kit** handy to GRAB & GO... if not, gather up enough food and water for each family member for at least 3 days!

IF INDOORS – Stay inside!

- Find a SAFE SPOT - get to small interior room, closet or hallway ... or lie on the floor under a heavy desk or table.
- Move away from windows and glass doors.

IF IN A MULTI-STORY BUILDING – Go to the first or second floor!

- Find a SAFE SPOT - get to a small interior room or hallway ... or lie on the floor under a heavy desk or table.
- Move away from outside walls and windows.
- Realize electricity may go out and alarms and sprinkler systems may go on.

Things to avoid:

- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooding car** - if flood waters rise around your car, get out and move to higher ground if you can safely
- **bad weather** - leave early enough so you are not trapped
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous in floods!!

Stay indoors - If you do not evacuate, stay indoors and stay away from glass doors and windows. Keep curtains and blinds closed and remember, a lull in the storm could only be the middle of the storm (the “eye”) and winds can start again. Keep listening to radio or TV reports.

Nasty weather - Be aware of other hazards like high winds, heavy rain, flooding and tornadoes. And realize weather can move hundreds of miles into the mainland too.

Right front quadrant - The northeast part or right front quadrant of a hurricane typically has the strongest winds and highest storm surge. If it's a high tide when the storm slams ashore you could have serious problems.

Limit phone calls - Only use phones in an emergency so it keeps lines open for local authorities.

AFTER A HURRICANE:

Stay put - Stay where you are (if you're in a safe location) and don't return home (if you've been evacuated) until local authorities say it's okay. Realize it may take weeks, months or years before some areas will be classed as "safe" due to health hazards or massive destruction from the storm.

Listen - Continue listening to your battery-powered radio for updates on weather and tips on getting assistance for housing, clothing, food, etc.

Stick together - Keep family together since this is a very stressful time. Try to find chores for children so they feel they're helping with the situation.

Things to avoid:

- **flood waters** - stay away from flood waters since it may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage or may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines - wait for local authorities to approve returning to flooded areas
- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out or weakened
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous and report them to power company

Things to watch out for:

- **weak structures** - be careful since buildings and homes could have been weakened by wind or floods
- **looting, guns and panicked people** - be aware people may become violent trying to find loved ones, water or food (or there may be criminals and jerks out stealing whatever they can)
- **bodies** - strong storm surges, floods, and high winds may cause deaths so be aware there may be dead human and animal carcasses scattered around

Drinking water - Use bottled water or purify water until officials advise it is okay to drink out of the tap. (*see TIPS ON WATER PURIFICATION*)

Flooded food - Throw away any food that has come into contact with flood waters since eating it can make you sick!

Wash your hands - Use clean water and soap when washing hands.

Use bleach – The best thing to use for cleaning up flooded areas is household bleach since it will help kill germs.

Insurance - Call your insurance agent to set up a visit to your home.

Mold - Consider asking a restoration professional to inspect your house for mold. (*see AIR QUALITY MITIGATION*)

No power? - If you use a generator, keep it outside and follow the manufacturer's instructions. (*see some safety tips in POWER LOSS MITIGATION*)

Donations – Lots of people want to help victims of a hurricane and here are some tips...

- **wait & see** - don't donate food, clothing or personal items unless they are specifically requested
- **money** - donations to a known disaster relief group, like the Red Cross, Salvation Army, churches, etc. is always helpful
- **volunteers** - if local authorities ask for your help, bring your own water, food and sleeping gear

Recovery tips - Review TIPS ON RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER at end of this Section.

What are YOU gonna do about... AN EMERGENCY?

Everyone should know what to do in an emergency. You should know who to call and what care to provide. Providing care involves giving first aid until professional medical help arrives.

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is a network of police, fire and medical personnel, as well as other community resources. People can help EMS by reporting emergencies and helping out victims until EMS can arrive.

During a major disaster, EMS groups will become swamped so if the public is prepared to handle some types of emergencies then we can help some of the victims until EMS arrives.

Your role in the EMS system includes the following things:

- BE AWARE...** Realize this is an emergency situation -- you could be putting yourself in danger!
- BE PREPARED...** Know how to handle the situation.
- HAVE A PLAN!** Check **ABCs...**, call 9-1-1 (or call for an ambulance) and help victim, if possible.

TIPS ON THE ABCs... AIRWAY, BREATHING & CIRCULATION

In an emergency, you need to check the victim for **ABCs...**

- Airway.** Open the airway by tilting the head back, gently lifting the jaw up, and leaving mouth open.
- Breathing.** Place your ear over victim's mouth and nose. Look at chest, listen, and feel for breathing for 3 to 5 seconds.
- Circulation.** Check for a pulse using fingertips (not your thumb) in the soft spot between throat and the muscle on the side of the neck for 5-10 seconds.

*Note: For **heart** emergencies when doing CPR, the steps are now **CAB!***

TIPS ON MAKING YOUR “EMERGENCY ACTION” PLAN

1. **BE AWARE...** Make sure it’s safe to approach area and victim.

Use your senses...

Listen for cries for help; screams; moans; explosions; breaking glass; crashing metal; gunshots; high winds; popping, humming or buzzing noises; lots of coughing, etc.

Look for broken glass; open medicine cabinet, container or bottle near victim; smoke; fire; vapors or mist; downed power lines, etc.

Watch for signs like trouble breathing; trouble talking; grabbing at throat or chest; pale or blue color in face, lips or ears; lots of people covering mouth or running away, etc.

Smell smoke or something burning; strong odors or vapors (leave if odor is too strong), etc.

Feel something burning your eyes, lungs or skin, etc.

2. **BE PREPARED...** The best thing you can do is **STAY CALM...** and **THINK** before you act!

Any time there’s an emergency or disaster, most people are scared or confused and many don’t know what to do. Take a few seconds and breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth to help slow your heartbeat and calm down. Always ask if you can help... either ask the victim or people around who may be helping.

3. **HAVE A PLAN!** Check **ABCs**, call 9-1-1 and help victim, if possible.

... Check victims’ **ABCs... Airway, Breathing, & Circulation**
(*Note: For **heart** emergencies, the steps are now **CAB!***)

... call 9-1-1, 0 for Operator or local emergency number for an ambulance (*see tips on next page*)

... help the victim, if possible -- and **STAY** until help arrives.

Before giving first aid, you must have the victim’s permission. Tell them who you are, how much training you’ve had, and how you plan to help. Do not give care to someone who refuses it - unless they are unable to respond.

TIPS ON CALLING 9-1-1 FOR AN AMBULANCE

Whenever there is an emergency, use the following tips to help decide if you should call 9-1-1 (or local emergency number) for an ambulance.

Call if victim...

- ... is trapped
- ... is not responding or is passed out
- ... is bleeding badly or bleeding cannot be stopped
- ... has a cut or wound so bad and deep that you can see bone or muscles
- ... has a body part missing or is torn away
- ... has pain below the rib cage that does not go away
- ... is peeing, pooping or puking blood (called passing blood)
- ... is breathing weird or having trouble breathing
- ... seems to have hurt their head, neck or back
- ... is jerking uncontrollably (called having a seizure)
- ... has broken bones and cannot be moved carefully
- ... acts like they had a heart attack (chest pain or pressure)

If you call 9-1-1 there may be a recording or delay while your call is being processed. DO NOT HANG UP -- wait for a 9-1-1 dispatcher.

When you talk to 9-1-1 or the emergency number...

- ... try to stay CALM and describe what happened and what is wrong with the victim
- ... give the location of the emergency, your name and the phone number you are calling from
- ... follow their instructions in case they tell you what to do for the victim
- ... do NOT hang up until the 9-1-1 operator tells you to.

TIPS ON REDUCING THE SPREAD OF GERMS OR DISEASES

Whenever you perform first aid on anyone, there is always a chance of spreading germs or diseases between yourself and the victim. These steps should be followed no matter what kind of first aid is being done -- from very minor scrapes to major emergencies -- to reduce the risk of infection.

BE AWARE...

- ... Try to avoid body fluids like blood or urine (pee).
- ... Cover any open cuts or wounds you have on your body since they are doorways for germs!

BE PREPARED...

- ... Wash your hands with soap and water before and after giving first aid.
- ... Have a first aid kit handy, if possible.
- ... Put something between yourself and victim's body fluids, if possible ...
 - blood or urine - wear disposable gloves or use a clean dry cloth
 - saliva or spittle – use a disposable Face Shield during Rescue Breathing
- ... Clean up area with household bleach to kill germs.

... and... HAVE A PLAN!

- ... see *TIPS ON MAKING YOUR "EMERGENCY ACTION" PLAN* two pages back.

TIPS ON GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS

The definition of a "Samaritan" is a charitable or helpful person. Most states have Good Samaritan laws that were designed to protect citizens who try to help injured victims with emergency care. If a citizen uses "logical" or "rational" actions while making wise or careful decisions during an emergency situation then they can be protected from being sued.

To learn more about your state's Good Samaritan laws, check with your local library, search the web or contact an attorney.

What are YOU gonna do about...

BLEEDING?

CONTROLLING BLEEDING

Things to watch for...

Source of bleeding

Pain and/or Swelling

Object sticking out or stuck in wound (like a piece of metal or glass or a bullet)

Shock (pale, cold or clammy, drowsy, weak or rapid pulse, etc.)

What to do...

- Be aware of your surroundings and be prepared to call for help. (see *TIPS ON CALLING 9-1-1 FOR AMBULANCE*)

If there IS object sticking out of wound (or possibly deep inside):

- Put thick soft pads around the object (or around wound).
- Gently try to apply pressure to help stop the bleeding.
- DO NOT try to remove or press on the object!
- Carefully wrap with a roller bandage to hold thick pads around the object.
- Get medical attention immediately!

If there is NO object sticking out of the wound:

- Be careful since there might be something inside wound.
- Cover wound with a clean cloth or sterile gauze pad and press firmly against the wound... and follow above steps if victim has an object inside the wound.
- If cloth or gauze becomes soaked with blood, DO NOT remove it! Keep adding new dressings on top of old ones.
- Carefully elevate injured body part above the level of victim's heart but be aware...there may be broken bones.
- Keep applying pressure on dressings until bleeding stops.
- Use firm roller bandage to cover gauze or cloth dressings.

If bleeding won't stop:

- Put pressure on nearby artery to help slow blood flow
Arm – press inside upper arm, between shoulder & elbow
Leg – press area where leg joins front of the hip (groin)

Visit www.stopthebleed.org to learn about the Stop The Bleed campaign.

INTERNAL BLEEDING

Minor internal bleeding is like a bruise – a vein, artery or capillary can break or rupture spewing blood under the skin. A more serious form of internal bleeding can be caused by a major fall, crushing accident or a blow to the head. It's very hard to tell if a person is suffering from internal bleeding since there may not be blood outside the body. Symptoms don't always appear right away but can be life-threatening so get medical help quickly.

Things to watch for...

Abdominal pain or tenderness

Pain and/or Swelling in abdomen (around belly button)

Shock (pale, cold or clammy, drowsy, weak or rapid pulse, etc.)

Either a fast or slow pulse

Coughing up bright, foamy blood (if blood is dark red, it means it's been bleeding inside for a while)

Blood in victim's pee, poop or puke

What to do...

- Be aware of surroundings and call for an ambulance.
- Don't move victim if injuries to head, neck or spine.
- Check **ABCs... Airway, Breathing & Circulation.**
- Stay with victim until help arrives

(Please review HEAD, NECK & SPINE INJURIES and SHOCK too)

NOSEBLEEDS

What to do...

- Have the person sit down, lean forward and pinch the soft part of the nose for about 10 minutes.
- Put an icepack or cold compress on the bridge of the nose.

SLASHED OR SEVERED BODY PARTS/AMPUTATION

What to do...

- Keep direct pressure on the stump to stop the bleeding.
- Find body part, if possible, and wrap in gauze or clean cloth.
- Put body part in an airtight plastic bag, put bag in ice water and take it to the hospital with the victim.

What are YOU gonna do about... CHOKING?

Things to watch for...

- Trouble breathing
- Coughing or choking for several minutes
- Gripping the throat with one or both hands
- High-pitched wheezing
- Bluish color of skin, lips, fingertips/nails, and earlobes

ATTENTION: There are TWO separate “What to do...” parts here... one for ADULTS & CHILDREN (below) and one for INFANTS (see next page)!

What to do... for ADULTS & CHILDREN (*Children over age 1*)

- Tell victim to try and cough it out. Ask “are you choking?” If victim nods yes, tell him/her you are going to help.
- Stand behind victim, wrap your arms around him/her and place your fist (thumb side in) just above victim’s belly button well below the breastbone.
- Grab the fist with your other hand and give quick, upward thrusts into their abdomen.
- Continue giving thrusts until the object is coughed out and victim can breathe, cough or talk or until he/she stops responding or passes out.

If ADULT or CHILD stops responding or passes out:

- Yell for help, check breathing, and position victim on a flat surface so you can begin CPR (30 compressions and 2 breaths) - or do Hands-only CPR - to help force object out.
- Find hand position in center of chest over breastbone
FOR ADULTS – see illustration 3-1 on page 190
FOR CHILDREN – see illustration 3-2 on page 191
- Begin chest compressions:
ADULTS – Using **both** hands, compress chest 30 times.
CHILDREN – Using **one** hand, compress chest 30 times.
- Check mouth for object after every set of 30 compressions then give 2 rescue breaths (if doing). After 5 sets, call 911.
- Continue doing 30:2 sets until victim moves, coughs or talks or help arrives.

What to do... for INFANTS (Newborn to age 1)

- If infant stops breathing, have someone call an ambulance.
- Turn infant face down on your forearm and support its head with that hand -- hold at angle so it's head is lower than chest. (May want to brace arm holding infant against your thigh.)
- Give 5 back blows between infants' shoulder blades with the heel of your other hand.
- If no object comes out, turn infant over so it is facing up on your forearm (still at an angle so head lower than chest) -- use your **first two fingers** to find the center of the breastbone on infant's chest.
- Give 5 thrusts to infant's chest using **only 2 fingers!** (Each thrust should be 1½ inches [3.81 cm] deep!)
- Repeat steps until infant can breath, cough, or cry or until he/she stops responding or passes out.

If INFANT stops responding or passes out:

- Place infant on a firm, flat surface above ground (like on a table or counter) so you can begin Infant CPR.
- Yell for help and check infant's breathing.
- Find finger position in center of chest over breastbone [*see illustration 3-3 on page 192*]
- Using **2 fingers only**, compress chest 30 times.
- Open the airway and check mouth for object(s). If you see it, take it out.
- Give 2 breaths ... and remember, cover both mouth and nose on Infants!
- Repeat giving sets of 30 compressions and 2 rescue breaths, checking the mouth for objects. After 5 sets, call 911 (if they haven't already been called).
- Continue doing 30:2 sets until infant starts to respond or help arrives.

What are YOU gonna do about...

A STROKE?

According to the American Stroke Association, every 4 minutes someone dies of a stroke making it the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S. It also is a leading cause of adult disability. Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death to Canadians according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. And more women die of strokes each year than men in both countries.

A stroke (or “brain attack”) occurs when oxygen and vital nutrients carried by blood are cut off causing brain cells to die. It’s cut off because...

...a blood vessel is blocked in the neck or brain (by a blood clot or narrowing of an artery) -- called an **ischemic** [is-KEM-ik] stroke (*causes about 80% of strokes*)

... or ...

...a blood vessel bursts or leaks -- called **hemorrhagic** [hem-o-RAJ-ik] stroke or bleeder (*causes about 20% of strokes*)

NOTE: You only have 2 - 6 hours maximum to stop permanent brain damage from a stroke - so get to a hospital as quickly as possible (within 3 hours is best!)

Things to watch for...

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding

Loss of muscle control on one side of the body

Loss of balance, stumbling, dizziness or fainting

Different sized pupils (one pupil small / one enlarged)

Severe headache

Blurred or double-vision in one or both eyes

Shock (pale, cold or clammy, weak or rapid pulse, etc.)

Transient ischemic attack (TIA / mini-stroke) - a minor or warning stroke - risk of major stroke is high

What to do...

- Call 9-1-1 for an ambulance.
- Get victim to lie back with head raised (put pillows or blankets under head and shoulders so partially sitting up).
- Loosen any tight or restrictive clothing.
- See if there are any other injuries.
- If victim is drooling or having problems swallowing, place them on their side to keep the airway open.
- Stay with victim until medical help arrives.

APPENDIX A

Citizen Corps / CERT

(Volunteer Programs for Americans & Canadians)

WHAT IS CITIZEN CORPS?

Citizen Corps was created to help coordinate volunteer activities that make the nation's communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation. Citizen Corps is managed at local levels by Citizen Corps Councils, which bring together existing crime prevention, disaster preparedness, and public health response networks with the volunteer community and other groups.

CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAMS & PARTNERS

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) educate people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event and can take a more active role in preparing their community. The program is administered by FEMA. Learn more at www.ready.gov/cert

Fire Corps promotes the use of citizen advocates to enhance the capacity of resource-constrained fire and rescue departments at all levels: volunteer, combination, and career. Citizen advocates can assist local fire departments in a range of activities including fire safety outreach, youth programs, and administrative support. Fire Corps provides resources to assist fire and rescue departments in creating opportunities for citizen advocates and promotes citizen participation. Fire Corps is administered by the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). Visit www.firecorps.org

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) strengthens communities by helping medical, public health and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year as well as during local emergencies and other times of community need. MRC volunteers work in coordination with existing local emergency response programs and also supplement existing community public health initiatives, such as outreach and prevention, immunization programs, blood drives, case management, care planning, and other efforts. The MRC program is administered by the Department of Health & Human Services. Check out <https://mrc.hhs.gov/>

National Neighborhood Watch incorporates terrorism awareness education into its existing crime prevention mission, while also serving as

a way to bring residents together to focus on emergency preparedness and emergency response training. The National Neighborhood Watch is administered by the National Sheriffs' Association. Learn more at www.nnw.org

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) works to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. VIPS serves as a gateway to resources and information for and about law enforcement volunteer programs. Funded by DOJ, VIPS is managed and implemented by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. To learn more visit www.theiacp.org/VIPS

Citizen Corps **Affiliate Programs & Organizations** offer communities resources for public education, outreach, and training; represent volunteers interested in helping to make their community safer; or offer volunteer service opportunities to support first responders, disaster relief activities, and community safety efforts. Some Affiliates include:

The **American Radio Relay League (ARRL)** represents the interests of the more than 650,000 U.S. Radio Amateurs (or “HAMS”). Many amateurs have organized themselves under a formal structure to better provide public service and emergency communications like the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES). Learn more by visiting www.arrl.org or contact your local Emergency Management office.

Civil Air Patrol is a congressionally chartered, non-profit corporation and is the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. CAP supports Homeland Security efforts by providing coastal patrol, air/ground observation, radio communications and relay, aerial reconnaissance, air-to-ground photography, radiological monitoring, and disaster and damage assessment assets. Learn more by visiting www.gocivilairpatrol.com

National Association for Search and Rescue is a non-profit membership association comprised of thousands of paid and non-paid professionals interested in all aspects of search and rescue throughout the United States and around the world. NASAR has trained over 30,000 responders since 1989 utilizing its internationally respected SARTECH© Certification Program. NASAR is dedicated to ensuring that volunteers (non-paid professionals) in search and rescue are as prepared as the career public safety personnel (fire, law and emergency medical services) with whom they work on a daily basis. Learn more at www.nasar.org.

Some other Affiliates include The American Legion, Home Safety Council, National Safety Council, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) and many others. To learn more about **Citizen Corps**

or to check if there's a local council in your community, please visit www.ready.gov/citizen-corps.

MORE ABOUT CERT

In the United States and Canada, the **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** program helps train volunteers to assist first responders in emergency situations in their communities. CERT members give critical support to first responders in emergencies, provide immediate assistance to victims, organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts.

The CERT course is taught in the community by a trained team of first responders who have completed a CERT Train-the-Trainer course conducted by their state training office for emergency management, or FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. CERT training includes disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, basic disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue operations and is usually delivered in 2-1/2 hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7 week period.

FEMA's online "Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams", IS 317, is an independent study course that serves as an introduction to CERT for those wanting to complete training or as a refresher for current team members. It has six modules with topics that include an Introduction to CERT, Fire Safety, Hazardous Material and Terrorist Incidents, Disaster Medical Operations, and Search and Rescue. It takes between six and eight hours to complete the course. The IS 317 can be taken by anyone interested in CERT. However, to become a CERT volunteer, one must complete classroom training offered by a local government agency such as the emergency management agency, fire or police department. To learn more, visit <https://training.fema.gov/emcourses> and search 317

For more information about CERT or to check if a CERT is in your community, visit www.ready.gov/cert ... or visit www.cert-la.com ... or call your local, state, provincial, or territorial Emergency Management Office to ask about volunteer opportunities.

Or visit your local or state / provincial web site to learn about other types of volunteer groups in your area and get involved!

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