



SURVIVING THE STORM: THE DISASTER DEFENSE DIGEST

Monthly Safety Message:

Emergency Alerts: Are You Actually Signed Up?

Emergency alerts only work if they can reach you. Most phones receive Wireless Emergency Alerts automatically, but that does not mean you are fully covered. Local counties, cities, and Tribal governments may also use opt-in alert systems for evacuation notices, shelter locations, road closures, severe weather updates, and public safety warnings. Take five minutes this May to check your phone settings, make sure emergency alerts are turned on, and sign up for your local alert system.

Do not stop with your own phone. Help elders, teens, employees, and family members check theirs too. Add a weather app, follow your local emergency management office, and keep a battery bank ready in case the power goes out. Alerts are not just messages, they are early warnings that give you time to act.

For more information, please visit the link below:

<https://www.ready.gov/alerts>



this issue

Prepared, Not Panicked **P.1**

From Treats to Travel Crates **P.2**

Plug Into Safety **P.3**

Prepared, Not Panicked: Helping Kids Feel Safe

Disaster preparedness does not have to feel scary, heavy, or overwhelming for children. In fact, when it is done the right way, it can make kids feel safer, braver, and more confident. The goal is not to make children afraid of fires, earthquakes, storms, or emergencies. The goal is to help them understand that families and communities can make plans, practice together, and take care of one another when something unexpected happens.

A good place to start is with one simple message: preparedness is about being helpers, not being scared. Children naturally want to help. They like having jobs, routines, and small responsibilities. Instead of saying, "Something bad might happen," try saying, "Our family is going to make a safety plan so everyone knows what to do." That small shift changes the entire feeling of the conversation.

Preparedness lessons should be age-appropriate and hands-on. Younger children can learn their full name, caregiver names, and how to call 911. They can help pack a small comfort item in the family emergency kit, such as a stuffed animal, coloring book, flashlight, or favorite snack. Older kids can learn how to read emergency alerts, identify safe meeting places, charge devices, check on pets, and help younger siblings during a drill.

Practice also matters, but it should feel like a routine, not a fear-based warning. Fire drills and evacuation walk-throughs can be treated like learning how to cross the

street or buckle a seatbelt. It is just something smart families do. Keep drills short, calm, and encouraging. Afterward, praise kids for what they remembered and gently review anything they missed.

One of the best ways to reduce fear is to give children choices. Let them decorate their emergency contact card. Let them pick a snack for the go-bag. Let them choose a small comfort item. When children participate, preparedness becomes something they own instead of something happening around them.

It is also important to make space for feelings. A child may ask, "Will our house burn down?" or "What if I cannot find you?" These questions can be hard, but they are opportunities to reassure them. Honest, calm answers are best. You might say, "That is why we practice. Our plan helps us find each other and stay safe." You can also remind them that being prepared does not mean something bad will happen, it means your family is doing smart things ahead of time. Let children know their feelings are normal, and that talking about worries together is one more way families stay strong.

Preparedness should never steal a child's sense of safety. It should build it. When kids know what to do, who to call, where to go, and how to help, they become more confident. The message they carry is simple and powerful: emergencies can happen, but we are not helpless. We have a plan, we practice, and we take care of each other.

Plug Into Safety: A Summer Generator Guide

When summer rolls in, so do the power outages. Between heat waves, wildfire risk, high energy demand, storms, and planned safety shutoffs, losing power can quickly turn from an inconvenience into a serious safety issue. A generator can be a lifesaver, keeping the refrigerator cold, medical devices running, phones charged, and fans moving air through the house. But generators also come with real dangers when they are used the wrong way. The best time to learn generator safety is not when the lights are already out. It is now, before the first outage occurs.

The biggest danger is carbon monoxide. It is invisible, odorless, and deadly. A portable generator should never be used inside a house, garage, shed, carport, basement, crawl space, or enclosed patio. Opening a window or garage door is not enough. Generators must be placed outside, far away from doors, windows, vents, and air intakes so exhaust cannot drift back into the home. If your home does not already have working carbon monoxide detectors, this is the month to install them and test them.

Extension cords are another safety concern. Use heavy-duty outdoor-rated cords that are in good condition and matched to the power load. Cords that are damaged, overloaded, or stretched across wet areas can create shock and fire hazards. Never run cords under rugs, through standing water, or where people can trip over them. A little planning before an outage can prevent a lot of chaos later.

Gasoline and other generator fuels should be stored in approved containers, away from living spaces, heat sources, and open flames. Always let the generator cool down before refueling. Spilling fuel on a hot engine can cause a fire, which is the last thing anyone needs during an emergency. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby and make sure adults in the home know how to use it.



extinguisher nearby and make sure adults in the home know how to use it.

One of the most dangerous mistakes is plugging a generator directly into a wall outlet. This is called backfeeding, and it can send electricity into power lines, putting utility workers and neighbors at serious risk. It can also damage your home's electrical system. If you want a generator to power parts of your home, have a licensed electrician install a proper transfer switch.

Think about what will keep your household safe and steady, not what will keep everything running like normal. Before an outage, choose the items that truly need power, such as the refrigerator, medical equipment, phones, a fan, or one small cooking appliance. A generator can only handle so much, and plugging in too many things at once can overload it. A simple priority list helps your family make smart choices, avoid hazards, and stretch generator power where it matters most.

Before summer outages begin, take one practical hour to prepare. Read the manual. Test the generator outdoors. Check the cords. Buy fuel safely. Test your carbon monoxide alarms. Talk through the plan with your household. Make sure everyone knows where the generator will be placed, who is allowed to operate it, and what should never be plugged in. A generator can bring light, cooling, communication, and peace of mind during an outage. Used wisely, it is more than a machine. It is part of a safe, thoughtful summer readiness plan.

GET CERTS...!

**Train with Purpose.
Lead with Impact. Build
Your Future.**

Ready to step into something bigger than a job? CAL TERRA's training programs are designed to turn everyday people into skilled responders, environmental stewards, and community leaders. Whether you're looking to launch a new career, gain real-world certifications, or strengthen your community's emergency readiness, this is where it starts.

Our hands-on training blends classroom learning with field experience, giving you the confidence to respond when it matters most. From HAZWOPER and emergency response to environmental restoration and workforce development, every course is built for real-world impact, not just theory.

You won't just learn, you'll do. You'll train alongside professionals, gain recognized certifications, and become part of a growing network focused on resilience, safety, and opportunity.

This is more than training. It's a pathway.

Step up. Get trained. Make a difference.

Be part of something that matters. For more information about our training programs, contact us at:
info@calterra.org

