

Be Prepared for Emergencies

Emergency Kit- should contain essentials.

first-aid supplies, clothing, blankets, tools, flashlights and battery-powered radios, as well as health supplies like insulin or asthma inhalers for medical conditions, at least three days' worth of bottled water and nonperishable food for each household member.

It should be checked every six months and be in easy-to-carry containers, like backpacks or duffel bags.

A specific plan- what to do at home during any emergency.

The plan should include a written escape route from the home and an established meeting place, like a store or parking lot, where household members can gather. It should also specify how people will communicate if scattered. Kids with cell phones is not totally bad.

FEMA advises pet owners to determine where pets can be taken, as many emergency shelters do not allow animals. And owners should have up-to-date veterinary records and proper ID tags for all pets.

Preparedness- your family and home.

Practice and revise (if necessary) your escape plan at least twice a year. Burglar bars, double-keyed door locks and secondary add-on locks for windows make it difficult to get out of a home in emergency situations. There are better methods for keeping others out without keeping you and your family in.

Printed guides and a DVD with more suggestions for preparing your home are free at fema.gov/areyouready. The Red Cross (redcross.org) and Homeland Security Department (dhs.gov) offer scores of other suggestions for handling emergencies.