

Emergency Planning

STEP 1

Get a Kit of Emergency Supplies

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer. While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food and clean air. Consider putting together two kits. In one, put everything needed to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

You'll need a gallon of water per person per day. Include in the kits canned and dried foods that are easy to store and prepare. If you live in a cold weather climate, include warm clothes and a sleeping bag for each member of the family.

Start now by gathering basic emergency supplies - a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, a NOAA Weather radio with tone alert, extra batteries, a first aid kit, toilet articles, prescription medicines and other special things your family may need. Many potential terrorist attacks could send tiny microscopic "junk" into the air. Many of these materials can only hurt you if they get into your body, so think about creating a barrier between yourself and any contamination. It's smart to have something for each member of the family that covers their mouth and nose.

Plan to use two to three layers of a cotton t-shirt, handkerchief or towel. Or, consider filter masks, readily available in hardware stores, which are rated based on how small a particle they filter. It is very important that the mask or other material fit your face snugly so that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children.

Also, include duct tape and heavyweight garbage bags or plastic sheeting that can be used to seal windows and doors if you need to create a barrier between yourself and any potential contamination outside

STEP 2

Make a Plan for What You Will Do in an Emergency

Be prepared to assess the situation, use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and your loved ones. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is deciding whether to stay or go. You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

Emergency Planning

Develop a Family Communications Plan: Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-state contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

Staying Put: There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "shelter-in-place," can be a matter of survival. Choose an interior room or one with as few windows and doors as possible. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents. Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits.

If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to "shelter-in-place." Quickly bring your family and pets inside, lock doors, and close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet for instructions.

Getting Away: Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency. If you have a car, keep at least a half tank of gas in it at all times. Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation out of your area. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. Take your emergency supply kit and lock the door behind you. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with your windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off. Listen to the radio for instructions.

At Work and School: Think about the places where your family spends time: school, work and other places you frequent. Talk to your children's schools and your employer about emergency plans. Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. If you are an employer, be sure you have an emergency preparedness plan. Review and practice it with your employees. A community working together during an emergency also makes sense. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.

STEP 3

Be Informed about what might happen

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency. However there are important differences among potential terrorist threats that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take.

Emergency Planning

SUPPLY CHECKLISTS

Emergency Supplies

Water, food, and clean air are the essential items for survival. Each family or individual's kit should be customized to meet specific needs, such as medications and infant formula. It should also be customized to include important family documents.

Recommended Supplies to Include in a Basic Kit:

Water, one gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
Battery-powered radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert, and extra batteries for both
Flashlight and extra batteries
First Aid kit
Whistle to signal for help
Dust mask or cotton t-shirt, to help filter the air
Moist towelettes for sanitation
Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
Unique family needs, such as daily prescription medications, infant formula or diapers, and important family documents
Garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
View recommended supplies to include in a Portable Kit

Clothing and Bedding:

If you live in a cold weather climate, you must think about warmth. It is possible that the power will be out and you will not have heat. Rethink your clothing and bedding supplies to account for growing children and other family changes.

One complete change of warm clothing and shoes per person, including:

A jacket or coat
Long pants
A long sleeve shirt
Sturdy shoes
A hat and gloves
A sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
Other items to consider adding to your Supply Kit:

Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or a print out of this information

Rain gear
Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
Cash or traveler's checks, change
Paper towels
Fire Extinguisher
Tent
Compass
Matches in a waterproof container

www.planforemergency.com

Emergency Planning

Signal flare
Paper, pencil
Medicine dropper
Feminine supplies
Personal hygiene items
Disinfectant
Household chlorine bleach

You can use bleach as a disinfectant (diluted nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water. Use 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.

Important Family Documents:

Keep copies of important family records such as insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container.

SPECIAL NEEDS ITEMS

Remember the special needs of your family members. Infants, the elderly and persons with disabilities need the same planning as everyone else, and sometimes a little more, to be prepared for a terrorist attack.

For Baby:

Formula
Diapers
Bottles
Powdered milk
Medications
Moist towelettes
Diaper rash ointment
For Adults:

Ask your doctor about storing prescription medications such as heart and high blood pressure medication, insulin and other prescription drugs.

Denture needs

Contact lenses and supplies

Extra eye glasses

For more information on supplies, see "Your Family Disaster Supply Kit" from American Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency

For Seniors:

Plan how you will evacuate or signal for help.

Plan emergency procedures with home health care agencies or workers.

Tell others where you keep your emergency supplies.

Teach others how to operate necessary equipment.

www.planforemergency.com

Emergency Planning

Label equipment like wheelchairs, canes or walkers.

Additional supplies for seniors:

List of prescription medications including dosage in your supply kits. Include any allergies.

Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries.

Extra wheelchair batteries or other special equipment in your supply kit.

A list of the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers in your emergency supply kits.

Copies of medical insurance and Medicare cards.

List of doctors and emergency contacts.

For People with Disabilities:

Create a support network to help in an emergency.

Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.

Give one member of your support network a key to your house or apartment.

Contact your city or county government's emergency information management office.

Many local offices keep lists of people with disabilities so they can be located quickly in a sudden emergency.

Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to help identify your disability.

If you are dependent on dialysis or other life sustaining treatment, know the location and availability of more than one facility.

Show others how to operate your wheelchair.

Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.

Additional Supplies for People with Disabilities:

Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of any allergies.

Extra eyeglasses and hearing-aid batteries.

Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen.

Keep a list of the style and serial number of medical devices.

Medical insurance and Medicare cards.

List of doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.

For more information on supplies, see "Your Family Disaster Supply Kit" from American Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

For more information on special needs, see Disaster Preparedness For People With Disabilities from FEMA, and Disaster Preparedness for Seniors by Seniors from the Red Cross.