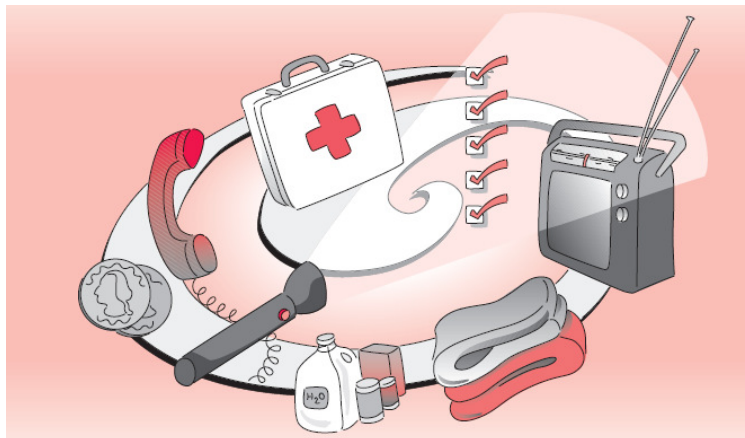


# Family Emergency Preparedness Plan

## Reference Guide

*medical  
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Be sure to review the plan in your workbook every 6 months, and change information on your Emergency Phone List and Wallet Cards.



This Reference Guide is designed to be used in conjunction with The *Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Workbook*.

The Family Emergency Preparedness Plan was originally developed by the Office of Emergency Preparedness Group at Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound, et al. The Wood County Health Department Health Department made updates and revisions. Funding for revisions and publication were made possible by federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness grants.

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# Family Emergency Preparedness Plan

## Reference Guide

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## Why Plan?

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Communities throughout Northwest Ohio are subject to a number of potential natural disasters such as fires, flooding, tornadoes, winter storms and heat waves. There are also hazards from nuclear, biological, or chemical accidents, or acts of terrorism. Terrorism may take many forms, including an intentional release of a biological, chemical or radiological agent. In addition, a fast-spreading infectious disease may cause our health care systems to be overwhelmed, and large portions of our workforce may be too sick to come to work.

### **Who is responsible for the health and welfare of you and your family in an emergency or disaster?**

Emergency services and government agencies may not be able to respond to your needs immediately. Their buildings, equipment, personnel, communications, and mobility may be severely hampered by the event. They will be overwhelmed!

### **Again: Who is responsible for the health and welfare of you and your family in an emergency or disaster? YOU ARE!**

Everyone needs to be prepared to survive on our own for a minimum of 3 days, and in some cases you may need to be able to stay home for 10 days.

We cannot stop these disasters from occurring, but we can limit their impact on us, and on those we love. Proper planning and preparation will help you and your family be safe. The most important concept in developing a Family Emergency Preparedness Plan is communication. Every member of the family needs to be involved so that when disaster strikes, everyone will know what to do, and how to keep in touch. How well you manage the aftermath of a disaster depends a great deal on how well you prepare now – before a disaster strikes.

This reference guide is to be used in conjunction with the *Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Workbook*. These two documents will serve as a step-by-step guide to disaster planning along with other essential information you will need in building a comprehensive Family Emergency Preparedness Plan. Be sure to involve all the members of your household when developing your preparedness plan. A plan will only work when everyone knows about it and knows their responsibilities.

Once your family is prepared, it is time to look to your neighbors. In times of disaster your neighbors will probably be the first ones available to come to your aid. Find out before disaster strikes what resources you share and how you can work together for the good of one another. Good luck! And don't forget to review your plan every 6 months.

**Prepare ... Because you care**

## Hazard Hunt

Conduct a hazard hunt to identify hazards in your home. When the item is safe, put a check mark in the box.

### Electrical / Appliances / Utilities

- One appliance on an outlet or extension cord.
- No more than one extension cord on one outlet.
- Broken, frayed cords or plugs have been replaced.
- Electric heaters don't cause blown fuses or lights to dim.
- Electric heaters are away from water.
- Circuits are clearly labeled, and area is free of clutter.
- Appliances are in good working order.
- Sump pump is installed and working - if appropriate.
- Utility shut-off valves are accessible. If a tool is needed, store one nearby.



### Fire

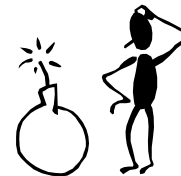
- An ABC type fire extinguisher is in your home, responsible family members know how to use it, and where it is kept.
- Smoke detectors are on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- All heating sources have at least 3 feet of space on all sides.
- Gas heaters have lines free of punctures or splits, and valves don't leak. (Inspect gas heaters once a month during heating season.)
- Fireplace and wood burning stoves have chimneys that are cleaned regularly.
- Kerosene heaters use only water-clear, Grade K-1 kerosene.
- Chimneys have spark guards on top.
- Fireplaces have screens.
- Flammable liquids are in tightly sealed and labeled and fire-safe containers, and away from sources of heat.

### Children

- Flammable liquids are out of children's reach.
- Poisons, toxins and solvents are clearly labeled and stored out of children's reach.
- Medicines are in child-resistant containers and kept out of reach.
- Electrical outlets have safety plugs.

### General

- Stairs and walkways are free of clutter.
- Handrails on all stairways are firmly secured.
- Free-standing book shelves are secured to the wall.
- Heavy items are stored on lower shelves.
- Heavy mirrors/pictures are tightly secured.
- Hanging plants are not overly large.
- House numbers can be easily seen from the road.
- Foundation is free of cracks.
- Tree limbs are trimmed within 10 feet of the house, and dead limbs hanging over house or garage are removed



## **Animal Emergency Preparedness**

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In an emergency, a well thoughtout, and practiced plan for your pets or farm animals will not only reduce your stress, but also save precious time and lives. It has been repeatedly shown that in an emergency people often resist official evacuation instructions, out of concern for their pets. Failure to plan for animals will put the animals and owners at a significantly higher risk of injury or death.

Below are recommendations to help keep you and your pets calm during an emergency. Use extreme caution when handling animals in an emergency. They are sensitive to severe weather and to stress, and will act unpredictably.

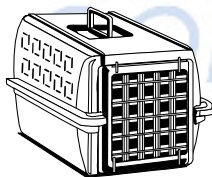
Remember that only service animals will be allowed into emergency shelters.

### **All Animals**

- Be sure that all animals have an identification tag / collar / halter that is worn at all times. Phone numbers can be written directly on collars and halters.
- Post phone numbers of boarding facilities and veterinarians, including 24 hour phone numbers on your Emergency Phone List and Wallet Card.
- Keep your pet's vaccinations up to date, and keep records to prove it with you if you must evacuate.

### **Household Pets in Disaster**

- Find local hotels and motels that allow pets and where pet boarding facilities are. Include some that are out of your area, in case the local ones have been closed or evacuated.
- Keep a current photo of your pet with you, in case you get separated from your pet.
- Make sure you have a secure pet carrier and/ or leash for each pet. They will need to be restrained during a tense situation.
- Assemble a disaster kit for your pet. Include:
  - 3 day supply of food, water, and medications
  - Feeding and care information
  - Written description of behavioral problems and helpful hints
  - Copy of Veterinary records
  - Bedding or rug
  - Litter box and litter, newspaper for caged animals
  - Can opener, food dish
  - Pet first aid kit
  - Plastic bags for clean up
  - Treats or toys if space permits



Place these items in a duffel bag, back pack, or waterproof container that is easily transportable. Provide the kit to whomever will assume responsibility for your pet during a disaster.

# Animal Emergency Preparedness – Continued

## Cats and Dogs

- Train your pet to enter its carrier at your command. Do this by placing your pet's favorite treat in the carrier, and by ringing a bell at the same time. Repeat this process every day until the animal goes in the carrier at the sound of the bell. Continue this training periodically. This training will be extremely helpful in finding and securing scared animals.



## Birds

- Birds should be transported in a secure travel cage or carrier. In cold weather, wrap a blanket over the carrier and warm up the car before placing birds inside. During warm weather, carry a small spray bottle to mist into the bird's feathers periodically.
- Do not put water inside the carrier during transport. Provide a few slices of fruit or vegetables with high water content.
- Once at the shelter, do not let birds out of the cage or carrier.

## Snakes

- Snakes can be transported in a pillowcase, but they must be put in a secure housing when they reach the evacuation site. If your snake requires frequent feedings, carry food with you. Take a water bowl large enough for soaking as well as a heating pad.

## Lizards, Tarantulas, Turtles (dry)

- These animals should be transported in a secure dry, warm environment.

## Hamsters, Gerbils etc.

- Should be transported in secure carriers suitable for maintaining the animals at the shelter. Take bedding, food and water bowls. Do not take animals out of their carriers.



## Fish, Aquatic Turtles

- Usually not necessary to evacuate or shelter during a short-term situation.
- If they must be evacuated, these pets are best sheltered with friends or relatives.
- If left behind during an evacuation, check and change water upon return.
- If evacuated, net fish into Ziploc bags filled with aquarium water, bring food.

## **Animal Emergency Preparedness - Continued**

### **Farm Animals in Disaster**

- Prepare an evacuation plan. Determine your primary and secondary route, and destination. Be sure that the destination has sufficient capacity to handle (or to obtain) the feeding, housing and medical needs of your animals.
- Keep vaccinations, testing and records up to date – and be sure to take them with you. For example: horses require a negative Coggins test, cattle must have Brucella certification or testing and Tuberculosis certification.
- Train animals to load into trailers.

**If evacuation of the animals is not possible, the nature of the disaster will determine the best course of action. In a nuclear, chemical or biological release, some amount of shielding can be provided if the animals are inside. In severe weather, or forest fire, it may be better for the animals to be out of the buildings.**

If animals are to be released, or may escape, be sure that every animal has identification securely attached. Be sure to leave a large open container of water that cannot be toppled over. Do not tie or cage your animal, as the chances for survival are greater if they can move around. Post a highly visible sign in a window to let rescuers know how many animals were left behind. Leave food in timed feeders if possible.

### **Farm Animals in a Nuclear Release**

In the event of a release of radioactive material, farm animals will require special consideration for feeding and care. This will be coordinated through the Incident Commander and the county emergency management.







## Special Needs Emergency Preparedness

Some people have barriers that will make responding to an emergency more difficult. These barriers may be physical, mental, emotional, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, or language based. These people will not be able to act in a manner expected of the general public. Because of the chaotic nature of emergencies, it is critical that advanced planning and coordination of resources be conducted. Disorientation, anxiety and panic, sensitivity to heat, loss of power to life support machines, reliance on the medical and pharmaceutical community, difficulty in hearing or understanding warnings, are just a few of the components that make people with special needs more vulnerable. In addition elderly people may refuse help – feeling that they are one step closer to losing their independence. Addressing special needs ahead of time will reduce the physical and emotional trauma caused by the emergency.

Below are recommendations that will assist people with a variety of special needs.

### All Special Needs People

- Ask about special assistance that may be available to you in an emergency.
- Register with your county Emergency Management, so that help can be provided more quickly.
- If you currently use a personal care attendant from an agency, check with the agency to see if they have special provisions for emergencies.
- Determine what you will do in each type of emergency. For example, people in a wheel chair may not be able to get to a basement in a tornado.
- Learn what to do in case of power outages. Know how to connect or start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment. Write it down in clear directions, and attach it to the power supply.
- Arrange for a relative or neighbor to check on you in an emergency.
- Keep your medications and aids in a consistent place. Keep extra aids in a second place, if possible.
- Keep extra supplies of the special items you need, including extra batteries for these items. Be sure to rotate out any items that expire. See page 7 of *The Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Workbook*.
- Service animals may become confused or frightened. Keep them confined or securely leashed.

### People with Mobility Challenges

- Store emergency supplies in a pack or backpack attached to the walker, wheelchair or scooter.
- Keep a pair of heavy gloves in your supply kit to use while wheeling over glass or debris.
- If your chair does not have puncture-proof tires, keep a patch kit or can of sealant and air to repair tires.
- If you cannot use stairs, discuss lifting and carrying techniques that work for you. Write out brief instructions, and keep in your pack.



## People with Visual Challenges



- If you have some vision, place security lights in each room to light paths of travel. These lights plug in, but have a battery backup in case of power failure.
- If helpful, mark emergency supplies with large print, fluorescent tape, or Braille.
- Store high-powered flashlights with wide beams and extra batteries.

## Hearing Impaired People



- Store hearing aids in a strategic and consistent place, so they can be located quickly.
- Have paper and pencil in your kit to use if you do not have your hearing aids.
- Install smoke alarms with both a visual and audible alarm. At least one should be battery operated.
- If possible, obtain a battery operated TV with a decoder chip for access to signed or captioned emergency reports.

## People with Medical Needs



- Always have at least a ten (10) day supply of all of your medications and medical supplies (bandages, ostomy bags, syringes, tubing, solutions, etc). See page 7 of *The Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Workbook*.
- If you use oxygen, be sure to have at least a three (3) day supply.
- Store your medications in one location, in their original container.
- Keep lists of all of your medications: name of medication, dose, frequency, and prescribing doctor in your wallet.
- For all medical equipment that requires power, get information regarding back-up power such as a battery or generator.
- Know if your IV infusion pump has a battery back-up and how long it would last in an emergency.
- Ask your home care provider about manual infusion techniques.
- Have written instructions for all equipment attached to the device(s).

# Staying Healthy During an Emergency

## Sanitation

Failure to properly dispose of human wastes can lead to epidemics of such diseases as typhoid, dysentery, and other gastro-intestinal illnesses. The lack of working sanitation facilities following major disaster can quickly create secondary problems unless basic guidelines are followed.

### **Do not flush the toilet:**

- If the water lines are damaged or if damage is suspected.
- If you are on a well and septic system and the power is out.

The water remaining in the fixture is not sufficient to flush the wastes down the pipes (clogging may result making your living conditions just that much more uncomfortable). Water must be conserved until the emergency situation has passed.

Do not dig a hole in the ground and use for disposing of waste (Except in extreme emergency conditions).

- Untreated raw sewage can pollute fresh ground water supplies.
- It also attracts flies and promotes the spread of diseases.

If the toilet is NOT able to be flushed, it can still be used. (This is less stressful for most people than using some other container).

- Remove all the bowl water.
- Line it with a heavy-duty plastic bag.
- When finished, add a small amount of liquid bleach, securely tie the bag, and dispose of it in a large trash can with a tight fitting lid. (If a secure lid can be created for the toilet, a single bag can be left lining the toilette for several uses, as long as a small amount of bleach is added after each addition).
- The bags should then be tied securely and put into a large trash can with a tight fitting lid that is lined with a sturdy trash bag. Eventually, the city will provide a means to dispose of these bags.

Portable camp toilets, or sturdy buckets with a tight fitting lid can be lined with heavy-duty plastic bags and be used. In this situation, add a small amount of liquid bleach after each use, and tie when full and put into a trash can also lined with a sturdy trash bag.

### **Tips for Staying Clean in an Emergency Situation**

As much as possible, continue regular hygiene habits such as brushing your teeth, washing your face, combing your hair and even washing your body with a wet washcloth. This will help prevent the spread of disease and irritation as well as help relieve stress.

- Keep your fingers out of your mouth. Avoid handling food directly with your hands.
- Wash your hands with soap and water, or alcohol gel after using the toilet, and before eating.
- Purify your drinking water. See page *10 The Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Reference Guide*.
- Sterilize your eating utensils by heat, or rinse dishes in purified water that has additional chlorine bleach added to it. (Use 2 1/2 teaspoons bleach per gallon of

purified water.

## **Preventing the Spread of Germs – and Respiratory Etiquette**

During an emergency, the stress, poor sleep and changes in your food and water consumption will make you more susceptible to catching an infection. The germs (viruses and bacteria) that cause these infections are spread from person-to-person in droplets from the nose, throat and lungs of someone who is sick. You can help stop the spread of these germs by practicing “respiratory etiquette,” or good health manners.

Here are some simple actions that will help keep respiratory infections and many other contagious diseases from spreading. These actions may become life saving during an infectious disease epidemic.

### **Keep your germs to yourself:**

- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- ◆ Throw out used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- ◆ Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose, or coughing, or after touching used tissues or handkerchiefs.
- ◆ Wash hands often if you are sick.
- ◆ Use warm water and soap or alcohol based hand sanitizers to wash your hands.
- ◆ Try to stay home if you have a cough and fever.
- ◆ See your doctor if you have a cough and fever that lasts for a long time. Take medicine as prescribed, drink lots of fluid, and get lots of rest.
- ◆ If asked to, use face masks provided in your doctor’s office or clinic’s waiting room; follow their instructions to help stop the spread of germs.

### **Keep the germs away:**

- ◆ Wash your hands before eating, and after touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ◆ Wash your hands after touching anyone else who is sneezing, coughing, blowing their nose, or whose nose is running.
- ◆ Don’t share things like food, utensils, cups, cigarettes, towels, lipstick, toys, or anything else that might be contaminated with respiratory germs.
- ◆ Wash hands after you have been cleaning up debris, or in contact with flood waters.

### **When washing your hands:**

- ◆ Get your hands wet.
- ◆ Put on soap – rub vigorously for 30 seconds – get the backs and fingernails too.
- ◆ Rinse hands in warm running water - while rubbing.
- ◆ Dry with a disposable towel.
- ◆ Use the disposable towel to turn off the water – and then dispose of it.
- ◆ If you don’t have access to water, hand sanitizers work well, but be sure to use enough so that you can rub your hands for 20 seconds – before the sanitizer is all gone.

## Three ways to purify water

In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. You should purify all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene. There are many ways to purify water. None are perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods. Three purification methods are outlined below. These measures will kill most microbes but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Before purifying, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel or clean cloth.

**1. Boiling.** Boiling is the safest method of purifying water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking.

Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

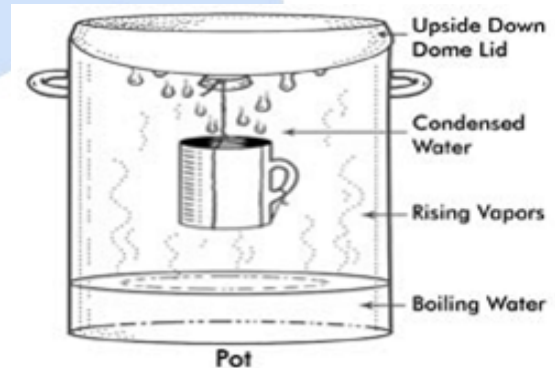
**2. Disinfection.** You can use household liquid bleach to kill microorganisms. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners.

Use an eye dropper to add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

The only agent used to purify water should be household liquid bleach. Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores that do not contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient, are not recommended and should not be used.

**NOTE: While the two methods described above will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes that resist these methods, and heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals.**

**3. Distillation.** Distillation involves boiling water and then collecting the vapor that condenses back to water. The condensed vapor will not include salt and other impurities. To distill, fill a pot with a few inches of water. Tie a cup to the handle on the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side up when the lid is upside-down (make sure the cup is not dangling into the water) and boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled.



## Utilities

In an emergency, it may be necessary to turn off your utilities. When done properly, this can prevent further injury to you, and further damage to your home. It is important to learn how and when to shut off sources of your natural gas or propane sources, electricity and water **before** an emergency. If you are on a private septic system, this too can be affected by a disaster. Below are some general guidelines, but be sure to check with your utility providers for more specific instructions.

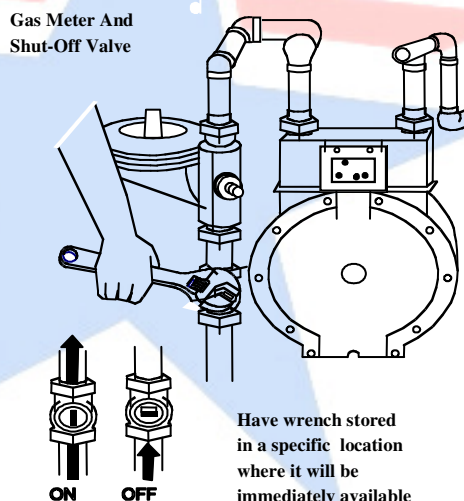
### Gas

- Locate your gas meter shutoff valve and learn how to turn the gas off.
- If you suspect the shutoff valve may be corroded and not working properly, call your utility company for an operational check of the valve.
- Ensure a wrench is immediately available for turning the gas meter off in an emergency.

- If you smell natural gas, get everyone out and away from the home immediately. Do not use matches, lighter, open flame appliances or operate electrical switches. Sparks could ignite gas causing an explosion.
- Shut off the gas **ONLY** if you smell gas and cannot locate the leak.
- Locate the valve that is on the pipe that feeds into the gas meter. Using a wrench, turn it one quarter of a turn to make the indicator parallel to the ground.

- **Let the gas company turn the gas back on.**
- Seek assistance of a plumber to repair gas pipe damage.

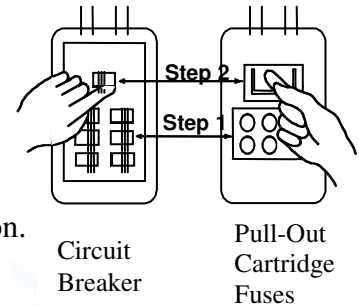
Sample Gas Meter And Shut-Off Valve



**Electricity**

- Locate your main electrical switch or fuse panel and learn how to turn the electrical power off.
- Step 1 Turn off the smaller breakers –one by one.
- Step 2 Flip the “main” breaker.
- Remember, electrical sparks can cause a fire or explosion.
- If you are using a generator as a backup power supply remember to:
  - Follow the generator manufacturer's instructions.
  - Connect lights and appliances directly to the generator and not the electrical system.
  - Generators connected to a utility company's electrical system must be inspected by the utility and the state electrical inspector. Failure to have the system inspected may result in death or injury to utility crews trying to restore service to the area.
- To restore power to your home, flip the “main” breaker first, and then the smaller breakers, one by one.

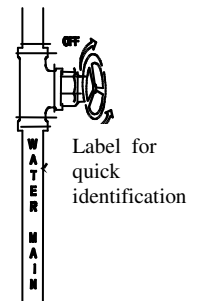
Electrical Shut-Offs



**Water**

- Label the water shut off valve and learn to turn off the water supply to your home (Turn clockwise to shut off water, and counter clockwise to restore).
- Ensure valve can be fully turned off. If the water valve requires the use of a special tool, make sure the tool is readily available.
- Shut off the main valve to prevent contamination of the water supply in your water heater and plumbing. In an emergency, the water in your water heater can be used if it is kept from contamination.

Water Shut-Off



**Sewer and Septic**

- Your sewer or septic system could be damaged in a disaster such as an earthquake, tornado or flood. Make sure the system is functioning as designed before using it to prevent contamination of your home and possibly the drinking water supply.
- Have a bucket or portable toilet available for disposing of human waste. Plastic bags placed in the toilet bowl will also work.

## Shelter in Place

There are situations when it is safer for you to stay in your home. The obvious situation is a tornado or winter storm. In addition, some biological, chemical, or radiological agents have toxic effects on people, animals and plants that can cause serious injuries or death. The severity of injury depends on the type and amount of the agent used, and the proximity and duration of exposure. People with medical conditions may be more susceptible. Below are guidelines for sheltering in place for a tornado and for a toxic agent release. Be sure to listen to an Emergency Alert System radio station for announcements from public officials.

### Tornado

- If a tornado warning is issued, seek shelter immediately.
- If in a residence or small building, move to the lowest level. If there isn't a basement, go to a small interior room. Bathrooms are good, as the plumbing will provide additional support. Get under a sturdy table if possible.
- Do not open windows. Use the time to seek shelter.
- In a school, nursing home, hospital, shopping center, go to pre-determined shelter areas. Interior hallways on the lowest level are usually safest. Stay away from windows and large rooms.
- See page 16 of the *Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Reference Guide* for additional information.

### Hazardous Release



■ Stay inside.



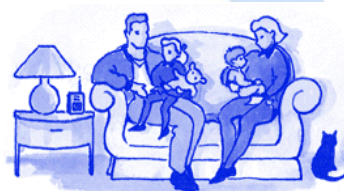
■ Close all windows and doors.



■ Turn off ventilation systems (heating and air-conditioning, fireplace dampers, etc.).



■ Go into a room with the fewest doors and windows and seal the room.



■ Stay in the room until told by the authorities that it is safe to come out.

- Listen to the radio for official public instructions.
- Dampen towels and place over the crack under the door.
- Cut plastic sheeting to fit over windows and vents. Secure with duct tape.
- Do not evacuate unless told to do so by authorities.
- If you were outside, and think you may have been exposed, read page 23 of the *Family Emergency Preparedness Plan Reference Guide* for additional information.





## Fire

The United States has the sixth highest fire death rates per capita in the world. At least 3,000 people die each year in fires, and an additional 14,000 are injured. Adults over 65 and children under 5 are at highest risk. Also at risk are people living in rural areas. Most people die from smoke or toxic gasses, and most home fires occur during the winter. Fire is the most likely disaster that families will experience.

### GETTING PREPARED

Working smoke detectors double your chances of surviving a fire.

- Install smoke detectors, according to the manufacturer's directions, on every level of your house; outside bedrooms on the ceiling or high on the wall, at the top of open stairways, or at the bottom of enclosed stairs and near (but not in) the kitchen.
- Clean smoke detectors once a month and change batteries when you set your clocks for Daylight Savings or Standard Time.
- Make sure your house address is visible from the road.
- Plan two escape routes out of each room. Contact your local fire authority for help in planning for the safe escape of those with special needs.
- Keep a folding ladder in each upstairs bedroom.
- Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut and security grating on windows have a fire safety opening feature.
- Teach everyone to stay low to the floor when escaping from a fire.
- Pick a meeting place outside your home for the family to meet after escaping from a fire. **ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!**
- Practice your escape plans at least twice a year.
- Clean out storage areas. Store flammable and combustible liquids in approved containers. Keep containers in the garage or an outside storage area.
- Inspect electrical appliances and extension cords for bare wires, worn plugs and loose connections annually.

## GETTING PREPARED

- Continued

- Clean and inspect ALL heating equipment annually.
  - Learn how to turn off the gas and electricity in an emergency.
  - Install A-B-C type fire extinguishers; teach family members how to use them.
  - Inspect or service your fire extinguisher annually.
  - Have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional annually.
- 

## In Case of a Fire

Not sure you can control the fire?  
Evacuate and then call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

- Do not attempt to extinguish a fire that is rapidly spreading – **CALL 911**
  - Use water or a fire extinguisher to put out **small** fires.
  - Never use water on an electrical fire.
  - Smother oil and grease fires in the kitchen with baking soda or salt, or put a lid over the flame if it is burning in a pan.
  - If your clothes catch fire -- **Stop-Drop-Roll** -- until the fire is out.
  - If the smoke alarm sounds, crouch down low, feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand before opening it. If the door is hot, escape through the window. If the door is not hot and this route is your only means of escape, crawl below the level of the smoke and use the first available exit door to escape. If you cannot escape, leave the door closed, stay where you are and hang a white or light-colored sheet outside the window.
- 

## After a Fire

Don't throw away damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.

- Stay out of the burned structure.
- Notify your local disaster relief services if you need housing, food, etc.
- Call your insurance agent. If you are a tenant, notify the landlord.
- Ask the fire department for assistance in retrieving important documents.
- Keep records of all clean-up and repair costs.



## Floods and Severe Storms

Northwest Ohio is susceptible to many types of severe weather including hailstorms, severe thunderstorms, torrential rains, and flooding. Damaging straight-line wind events make up about 65 percent of all the severe weather events, hail accounts for 25 percent, and floods, tornadoes and other severe weather events make up the remaining 10 percent.

### GETTING PREPARED

Learn what to do when you hear flood warning signals.

- Find out if you live in a flood-prone area.
- Consider purchasing flood insurance.
- Ask your local emergency management director about official flood and severe storm warning signals.
- Consider buying a battery powered weather radio and extra batteries.
- Know the terms: Flood Watch and Warning, Flash Flood Watch and Warning, Urban and Small Stream Warning, Severe Thunderstorm Watch and Warning, Tornado Watch and Warning.
- Plan for evacuation in case of a flood, and identify a shelter room in case of a tornado.
- Remove large branches, and dead trees that may fall on your house.
- Consider having a professional install a lightning rod on your home.
- Take steps to flood-proof your home. Call your local building department or emergency management office for information.

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### **In Case of a Flood or Severe Storm**

If there is any possibility of a flash flood occurring, move immediately to higher ground.

- If a watch is issued, listen to radio or television stations for local information.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels and areas known to flood suddenly.
- If local authorities issue a flood watch, prepare to evacuate.
- If the National Weather Service issues a Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch, prepare to take shelter.
- If you are in a boat, or in the water, seek shelter on dry land.
- Do not go outside during an electrical storm.
- If you are caught outside in an electrical storm, go to a low area, and crouch down (do not lie down). Avoid being, or being near the tallest object.
- Do not use faucets, electrical appliances or telephones during an electrical storm.
- If you are in your car, stay there until the storm passes.
- If a warning is issued, take action immediately.
- Secure your home. If time permits, secure items located outside the house.
- Fill the bathtub with water in case water becomes contaminated or services are cut off. Sterilize the bathtub first.
- When deep flooding is likely, permit the floodwater to flow freely into your basement to avoid structural damage to the foundation and the house.

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### After a Flood or Severe Storm

Flood waters may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. The water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- Stay away from floodwaters.
- Stay away from moving water. Moving water six inches deep can sweep you off your feet.
- Be aware of areas where flood waters have receded and may have weakened road surfaces.
- Stay away from and report downed power lines.
- Stay away from disaster areas unless authorities ask for volunteers.
- Continue listening to the radio for information about where to get assistance.
- Consider health and safety needs. Wash your hands frequently with soap and clean water.
- Make sure your tetanus vaccination is up to date – maximum of 7-10 years ago. If it is not, or you are not sure, contact the public health department.
- Bathe pets who come into contact with flood waters.
- Throw away food that has come in contact with floodwaters.
- If your house sustained damage, call your insurance agent, and keep records of all clean-up and repair costs.
- Take photos of or videotape your belongings and your home.
- Don't throw away damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.





## Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Heavy snowfall, ice and extreme cold can immobilize an entire region. The results may include a wide variety of emergencies: extended power outages, isolation, injury or death, and property damage resulting from cars and trucks sliding on icy roads.

### GETTING PREPARED

Help the elderly prepare too.

- Know the terms used by weather forecasters.
- Consider purchasing a battery-powered NOAA weather radio and stock extra batteries.
- Purchase rock salt to melt ice on walkways and sand to improve safety. Keep your car "weatherized" with antifreeze, use snow tires, and keep your car's gas tank at least 1/3 full.
- Carry a cell phone.
- Make sure you have an alternate heat source and a supply of fuel.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic.
- Insulate walls and attics.
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.



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## During a Snow Storm

Dress for the weather and keep a "winter car kit" in the trunk of your car.

- Listen to the radio or television for weather reports and emergency information.
- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, light-weight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.
- Wear a hat -- most body heat is lost through the top of head, and wear mittens instead of gloves.
- Avoid overexertion.
- Watch for signs of frostbite. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. If signs are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.

## Caught in Your Car During a Blizzard

Remain in your vehicle and wait to be found.

- 
- Pull off the highway and set your hazard lights to flash. Hang a distress flag from the radio antenna. Use your cell phone to call for help.
  - Clear snow from your exhaust pipe, and then run the engine and heater about ten minutes each hour to keep warm. While the engine is running, slightly open a window, and re-check the exhaust pipe.
  - Exercise lightly to maintain body heat. Huddle with passengers to stay warm.
  - Take turns sleeping.
  - Be careful not to run the car battery down.
  - If stranded in a remote rural or wilderness area, spread a large cloth over the snow to attract attention of rescue personnel.
  - Once the blizzard passes, you may need to leave the car and proceed on foot. Leave a note indicating the time and direction you are headed.



## Power Outages

Everyone experiences power interruptions from time to time. Unfortunately, many of these outages come at times of weather extremes or accompany various disasters. When the power is out many lose their source of heat and water, and sanitation. Many medical devices rely on electricity; and cordless phones and cell phones will not be able to charge. When the power is out, safety becomes a major concern.

### GETTING PREPARED

Elderly people and babies are the most susceptible to the dangers that go with an extended loss of power.

- Register life-sustaining equipment with your utility.
  - Post the phone number of the power utility on your Emergency Phone List.
  - If you own an electric garage door opener, learn how to open the door without power.
  - Have a corded telephone available. Cordless phones that do not have a battery back-up, will not work.
  - Consider purchasing a small generator. When installing generators, follow the manufacturer's instructions and have it inspected by the utility company and the state electrical inspector.
  - If your home is the only one without power, check your fuse box or circuit breaker panel. Turn off large appliances before replacing fuses or resetting circuits.
- 
- If power is out in the neighborhood, disconnect all electrical heaters and appliances to reduce the initial demand and protect the motors from possible low voltage damage.
  - If you leave home, turn off or unplug heat producing appliances.
  - Unplug computers and other voltage sensitive equipment to protect them against possible surges when power is restored.
  - Conserve water, especially if you are on a well.
  - Keep doors, windows and draperies closed to retain heat in your home.
  - Be extremely careful of fire hazards caused by candles other flammable light sources.

### When the Lights Go Out

Report power outages to the utility company.



## Power Outage

- Continued

If in doubt, throw it out. Throw out meat, seafood, dairy products and cooked food that do not feel cold.

- When using kerosene heaters, gas lanterns or stoves inside the house, maintain ventilation to avoid a build-up of toxic fumes. *Never use charcoal or gas barbecues inside; They produce carbon monoxide.*
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. If the door remains closed, a fully loaded freezer can keep foods frozen for two days.
- Use a cooler packed with ice or snow to keep food cold, or place blocks of ice in the refrigerator.
- Use caution if storing food outside during the winter. The outside temperature varies, especially in the sun. Food stored outside must be secured from contamination by animals.
- Use foods that may spoil first.
- Never taste suspect food. Even if food looks and smells fine, illness-causing bacteria may be present.

NOTE: Leave one light switch in the on position to alert you when service is restored

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## Hazardous Material Releases

Any material, either alone or in combination with other substances, that has the potential to threaten human health or the environment is considered to be a hazardous material. Hazardous materials are common in communities both in the workplace and in the home. Hazardous materials are most commonly stored at businesses or industrial sites and may be in above-ground or below-ground containers of various types. They are transported by truck, rail, air, water and pipeline. The Local Emergency Planning Committee plans and prepares for accidental or intentional hazardous materials releases. The law requires facilities to provide information on any hazardous materials present, in terms of both potential risks and their effects on public health, safety and the environment.

### GETTING PREPARED

Evaluate the risks to your family.

- Ask your local emergency management officials about emergency warning procedures.
- Find out precise information about where reportable quantities of extremely hazardous substances are stored and where they are used.
- Determine how close you are to freeways, railroads or factories which may produce or transport toxic materials.
- Be prepared to evacuate.
- Choose an interior room as a “safe spot” that does not have any windows (or as few as possible) and without an exterior door.
- Include in your family disaster kit, a roll of plastic sheeting and duct tape, and scissors, to seal off the windows and doors in your “safe spot”.
- Teach responsible family members how to shut off all ventilation systems, including furnaces, air conditioners, vents and fans.
- Ensure that several people at your work place know how to turn off the ventilation systems.
- Purchasing a gas mask is NOT recommended.

10 square feet per person of floor space will provide sufficient air to prevent carbon monoxide build up for up to 5 hours.

## Initial Response to a Hazardous Material Incident

Strictly follow all instructions given by emergency authorities.



- If you are a witness -- call 911.
- If you hear a warning signal -- listen to local radio or television stations for further information. Follow all instructions.
- If local officials say there is time, close all windows, curtains, and doors, shut vents, and turn off attic fans and other ventilation systems to minimize contamination. Then take your portable radio and family disaster kit, and go to your safe spot. Cover doors with plastic sheeting, and secure with duct tape.
- If caught outside -- stay upstream, uphill or upwind. Try to go one-half mile (10 city blocks) from the danger area.
- If you suspect gas or vapor contamination -- take shallow breaths through a cloth or towel.
- If you are in a car -- close windows and shut off ventilation.
- Evacuate if told to do so.
- If you or someone else has been or may have been exposed to chemical agents seek medical help. Advise them of your potential exposure.
- If medical help is not available, use extreme caution and:
  - Remove all items in contact with the body.
    - Flush eyes with lots of water.
    - Gently wash face and hair with soap and water; then thoroughly rinse with water.
    - Decontaminate other body areas likely to have been contaminated. Blot (do not swab or scrape) with a cloth soaked in soapy water and rinse with clear water.
    - Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers without allowing them to contact other materials: get directions for proper disposal
    - Change into uncontaminated clothes. Clothing stored in drawers or closets is likely to be uncontaminated.
    - If possible, proceed to a medical facility for screening

**Response to a  
Hazardous  
Material Incident  
- Continued**

- Avoid contact with any spilled liquid materials, airborne mist or condensed solid chemical deposits.
- Do not eat or drink any food or water that may have been contaminated.
- Seek medical help for unusual symptoms, advise them of your exposure.
- Get direction from local authorities on how to clean up your land and property.
- Return home only when directed to do so.
- Upon returning home, ventilate the house.
- Report lingering vapors or other hazards.

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## Nuclear Power Plants

In the United States, nuclear power plants have been generating power for more than 45 years. Nuclear power plants are designed to provide multiple barriers to prevent escape of radioactive material. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission closely monitors the operation of these facilities. Accidents at these plants are very unlikely, but still possible. An outdoor emergency warning system is in place. It consists of sirens placed throughout the ten-mile radius of each plant. It is important to understand that federal, state, and local officials agree that evacuation away from a radioactive plume is by far the best means of limiting radiation exposure. Potassium Iodide (sometimes called KI) is a small tablet that can be an effective means to protect the human thyroid from the effects of radioactive iodine, one of the isotopes that could be released during an emergency. KI will not protect entire body from radiation, only the thyroid, only from one isotope, and must be administered at the correct time and dosage. The most effective means of minimizing negative health effects from nuclear radiation are to increase the distance you are from the radioactive material, shield yourself using barriers, and reduce the time you are exposed.

### GETTING PREPARED

Time, distance and shielding are the keys to minimizing radio-active exposure.

- Know the terms and actions associated with a nuclear emergency:
  - Notification of Unusual Event
  - Alert
  - Site Area Emergency
  - General Emergency
- Learn your community's warning system, and what to do when they sound.
- Obtain public emergency information materials from the company operating the plant.
- Be prepared to evacuate.
- Know the evacuation procedures for schools and day cares.
- Purchasing Potassium Iodide tablets, Geiger counters or gas masks is NOT recommended. (If living within 10 miles of a power plant.)

### Responding to a Power Plant Emergency

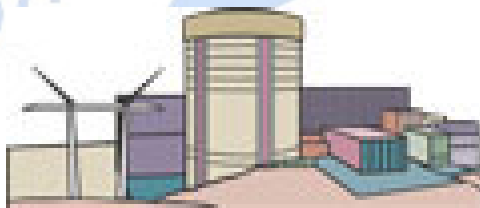
Local instructions take precedence over advice in the handbook.

- If siren sounds, go indoors and listen to the radio or TV for official instructions.
- Keep calm. Not all incidents result in the release of radiation.
- Stay tuned to your local radio or television stations for information.

**Responding to a  
Power Plant  
Emergency**  
- Continued

- Evacuate if you are advised to do so.
  - Close and lock home doors and windows.
  - Keep car windows and vents closed; use re-circulating air.
  - Listen to the radio for evacuation routes and other information.
- If not ordered to evacuate -- stay indoors.
  - Close doors and windows.
  - Turn off air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace and other air intakes.
  - Go to a basement or other underground area if possible.
  - Keep a battery-powered radio handy at all times.
  - If you must go outdoors -- cover your nose and mouth with a handkerchief.
- Shelter livestock and give them stored feed, if time permits.
- Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.
- If you have just been outdoors -- shower and change clothes. Put clothing and shoes in a plastic bag; seal it up and store it out of the way.

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## Biological and Public Health Emergencies

Through intentional release by a terrorist, or a natural epidemic, a biological agent – such as a virus or bacteria - may spread quickly through a community, the region, or the nation. Medical facilities will quickly become overwhelmed and health care may not be available to all that need it. Individuals need to have the supplies on hand to care for themselves for at least 10 days. Also, it may be necessary for you to go to work, even if schools and day cares are closed. **It is important to remember there are significant differences among potential threats and the actions you must take to protect yourself and your family. It may be more appropriate to evacuate, or to stay and “shelter-in-place”.** Learn now about these threats, and then in an event, listen to your radio for official instructions.

### GETTING PREPARED

Learn about the wide variety of hazards and safest reactions

- Ask local public health department about community Public Health emergency preparedness plans.
- Educate family members on good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Reinforce this – regularly.
  - Sneeze or cough into your elbow, or a tissue.
  - Discard tissue immediately after use.
  - Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or when touching the nose or mouth.
  - Wash hands before preparing food or eating.
  - Wash hands after touching someone who is sick.
- Do not share drinking cups, water bottles, utensils, or other items placed in another person’s mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Get seasonal flu vaccinations - if appropriate.
- Store up to 10 days of food, water and medicines. Include items you may need for fever, cough, and colds, and fluids with electrolytes (Gatorade or Pediacare, etc.)
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about getting an extra supply of prescription medications that you take regularly. Be sure to rotate these into the supply you regularly use, so that they do not expire.
- Find a backup situation for children and people with special needs who rely on you, in case schools and day cares are closed.

Stockpiling antibiotics or anti-viral medications is NOT recommended.

## Responding to a Biological Emergency

Surgical type masks are designed to protect the patient from being infected by a respiratory virus. This style of mask does NOT protect the person who is wearing the mask. In the event of an infectious disease, staying at least 3 feet away from people, and washing your hands will be the most effective measure of infection control for the general public.

- In certain circumstances, it may be possible to prevent exposure to a biological agent by “sheltering in place” using the same actions as listed in a hazardous material accident (see above.)
- At the time of a health emergency, if a family member becomes sick, it is important to be suspicious, but do not automatically assume that you should go to a hospital emergency room. Symptoms of many common illnesses may overlap. Use common sense, practice good hygiene, and seek medical advice.
- Get medical attention if you know you have been exposed.
- Listen to your radio for official instructions, as the delivery of medical services may be handled differently to respond to increased demand.
- If you are instructed to go to a local site to get medications, you will need to know information such as: any chronic conditions you have, the medications you are on, your weight, date of birth, social security number. Listen to official instructions, and follow them carefully.
- If your skin or clothing comes in contact with a visible, potentially infectious substance, you should remove and bag your clothes and personal items, and wash yourself with warm soapy water immediately. Put on clean clothes and seek medical assistance.
- If the biological event is ongoing, such as an infectious disease outbreak or epidemic:
  - Wash your hands often, using soap and scrubbing for at least 30 seconds.
  - Stay at least 3 feet from people.
  - Use drive-throughs, email, and phone when ever possible.



# Heat Wave

An extended period of unusually high temperatures and humidity can cause sickness and death. During a heat wave, keeping cool and keeping hydrated will be important in order to save lives.

## GETTING PREPARED

Think about your own family and your neighbors too.

- Check with elderly neighbors and relatives to see who will check on them during a heat wave.
- Install awnings, louvers or drapes over windows that get morning or afternoon sun.
- Keep a few bottles of water in your freezer. If the power goes out, move them to your refrigerator, and keep the door shut.

## Responding to a Heat Wave

- Conserve your energy by doing strenuous tasks at cooler times.
- Drink at least 8 ounces of water, 8 times per day.
- Place a cool wet wash cloth on your forehead, neck or wrists to keep cool.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and loose clothing when outside.
- Watch for signs of dehydration. If detected, treat immediately.
- Watch for signs of heat illness (dizziness, nausea, headache, muscle cramps). If detected- move to a cooler location, and slowly drink a cool beverage. Seek medical treatment if this does not help.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes – especially for elderly or babies.
- Avoid sunburn – it slows the ability of the skin to cool itself.
- Eat more frequently, but make sure meals are balanced and light.
- Never leave any person or pet in a closed, parked vehicle.
- Avoid dressing babies in heavy clothing or wrapping them in blankets.
- Make sure pets have plenty of water.
- If you take diuretics, antihistamines, mood-altering or antispasmodic drugs, check with a doctor about the effects of sun and heat exposure.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun.