

Family Disaster Supply Kit

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere. And when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. A highway spill or hazardous material could mean evacuation. A winter storm could confine your family at home. An earthquake, flood, tornado, or any other disaster could cut water, electricity, and telephones-for days.

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. Would your family be prepared to cope with the emergency until help arrives?

Your family will cope best by preparing for disaster before it strikes. One way to prepare is by assembling a Disaster Supply Kit. Once disaster hits, you won't have time to shop or search for supplies. But if you've gathered supplies in advance, your family can endure an evacuation or home confinement.

Disaster Supply Kits can be stored in large plastic trash containers, duffle bags, or camping bags. Supplies should come from each of the following six categories:

Food And Water

Water

Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.

Store one gallon of water per person per day.

Keep at least a three-day supply of water per day (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation).

Food

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supply Kit: ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables

First Aid

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car. A first aid kit should include:

Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes

Assorted sizes of safety pins

Cleansing agent/soap

Latex gloves (2 pairs)

Sunscreen

2-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)

4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6)

Triangular bandages (3)

Non-prescription drugs

2-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls)

Scissors

Tweezers
Needle
Moistened towelettes
Antiseptic
Thermometer
Tongue blades (2)
Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
Non-Prescription Drugs
Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever
Anti-diarrhea medication
Antacid (for stomach upset)
Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
Laxative or Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Tools And Supplies

A tool and supply kit should include:

Mess kits, or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
Emergency preparedness manual
Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
Flashlight and extra batteries
Cash or traveler's checks, change
Non-electric can opener, utility knife
Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC type
Tube tent
Pliers
Tape
Compass
Matches in a waterproof container
Aluminum foil
Plastic storage containers
Signal flare
Paper, pencil
Needles, thread
Medicine dropper
Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water
Whistle

Plastic sheeting
Map of the area (for locating shelters)
Toilet paper, towelettes
Soap, liquid detergent
Feminine supplies
Personal hygiene items
Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
Plastic bucket with tight lid
Disinfectant
Household chlorine bleach

Clothing And Bedding

Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

Also, your kit should include:

Sturdy shoes or work boots
Rain gear
Blankets or sleeping bags
Hat and gloves
Thermal underwear
Sunglasses

Special Items

Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons.

For Baby

Formula
Diapers
Bottles
Powdered milk
Medications

For Adults

Heart and high blood pressure medication
Insulin
Prescription drugs
Denture needs
Contact lenses and supplies

Extra eye glasses

Entertainment

Games and books

Important Family Documents

Will, insurance policies, contracts deeds, stocks and bonds

Passports, social security cards, immunization records

Bank account numbers

Credit card account numbers and companies

Inventory of valuable household goods

Important telephone numbers

Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

Storage And Maintenance

Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car.

Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh. Replace your stored food every six months. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.

Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container.