



Family Emergency Preparedness Guide

Bannock County Office of Emergency Management

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Your Family Disaster Plan

Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services – water, gas, electricity or telephone – were cut off? Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster but they cannot reach everyone right away. Medical help may not arrive at all. County resources will be overwhelmed in a major disaster.

Families can – and do – cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps listed in this brochure to create your family’s disaster plan. Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility.

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere – at work, at school, or in the car.

How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe?

Steps to Safety

1. Find Out What Disaster Could Happen to You

- Natural; Human; Technological; Winter Storm; Bomb Threat; Structural Failures; Wildland Fire; Fire; Transportation Failures; Earthquake; Utilities Failure; Terrorism; Cold/Heat Wave; Hazardous Materials; Pandemic Influenza

2. Create a Disaster Plan

- Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather, and earthquakes to children. Plan to share the responsibilities and work together as a team. Discuss the following and explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet:
 - Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
 - Outside your neighborhood in case you can’t return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be your “Family Contact.” After a disaster, it’s often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

3. Complete this Checklist:

- Post emergency telephone numbers (fire, police, ambulance, etc.).
- Teach children how and when to call 911 for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it's kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Take a First Aid and CPR Class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find a safe spot in your home for each type of disaster.
- Practice and maintain your plan.
- Quiz your family every six months so they remember what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Replace stored water every three months and stored food every six months.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year. Every six months is even better.

72-Hour Kit

Disaster happens anytime and anywhere, often without notice. You and your family will cope best by preparing for a disaster before it strikes. Prepare a kit, utilizing the following:

- Large duffel bag, sturdy trash bag, backpack, etc. for containing of supplies
- Store water in containers that don't break down such as milk cartons or glass containers. Store one gallon of water per person per day. To purify, add 10 drops of bleach per gallon of water (not color-safe bleach). Water can be boiled for 10-12 minutes to purify; however, during an emergency, boiling is usually not an option.
- Store at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable foods that require no refrigeration, preparation, or cooking, and little to no water. Such foods include ready-to-eat meats, fruits, vegetables, granola bars, pop tarts, crackers, trail mix, nuts, etc. Include a can opener, utensil, and a utility knife.

First Aid Kit

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Sterile gauze pads in assorted sizes
- Hypo-allergenic adhesive tape
- Roll-type bandages, Ace wrap, adhesive bandages
- Scissors and tweezers
- Epi-pen (if allergic to bee stings)
- Sewing needles
- Moistened towelette/wet wipes
- Antiseptic (iodine compounds, etc.)
- Neosporin
- Thermometer
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent
- Latex gloves
- Calamine lotion
- First aid manual
- Rubbing Alcohol
- Heavy string or thread
- Cotton balls
- Splinting materials (cardboard, magazines, cut-up sheets in 40-inch squares for sling and swath)
- Non-prescription meds of pain reliever, anti-diarrhea, antacids, laxatives, aspirin
- Prescription medications

Tools and Supplies

- Mess kits or paper/plastic products for eating on
- Emergency Preparedness manual/guide
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries,
- Or solar/hand-crank radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries and/ or flashlight (crank, friction, or with batteries)
- Cash
- Non-electric can opener, utility tool
- Fire extinguisher (ABC type)
- Tent
- Pliers
- Duct tape
- Compass
- Matches in waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flares
- Paper, pencils
- Needles, thread
- Shut-off wrench for gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic tarp or sheeting
- Extra set of car and house keys
- Maps

Sanitation

- Toilet paper, towelettes
- Soap, liquid detergent (SOS /Brillo-type pads with dry soap)
- Feminine supplies
- Personal Hygiene items
- Plastic garbage bags, and ties for disposal of biohazards
- Plastic bucket with a tight lid
- Disinfectant and household chlorine bleach

Clothing and Bedding

- Sturdy shoes
- At least one change of clothes and footwear
- Rain gear
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Hat, gloves, thermal underwear
- Sunglasses

Special Items

Remember family members with special requirements such as infants and elderly, disabled, and those medicated.

For Baby

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles & powdered milk
- Medications

For Adults

- Medication (prescribed and over the counter)
- Denture care needs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Extra eyeglasses

For Pets

- Medications, including for fleas and worms
- Records
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses
- Carrier
- Pet beds, toys
- Litter and pan
- Current photos
- Food and drinkable water for three days

Other

- Books to read
- Family records, credit card info and numbers, birth, marriage certificates, passports, etc.
- Phone numbers
- Inventory of valuable items and insurance information
- Waterproof case for these records

Reminders

- Store records where all in the family are aware of and in a protected container.
- Change stored water every six months.
- Replace stored food every 6 months.
- Rethink your kit at least once a year (batteries, medications, etc.)
- Speak to your doctor regarding storing medications and read labels of food and drugs as well as date stamp

Prepare Your Vehicles

If you are evacuating an area or you are stranded in your vehicle, you should make sure your vehicle is prepared to help you survive. Prepare now by storing the following items in your vehicle and be sure to rotate the items periodically. Keep vehicles fueled (try to maintain at least 1/2 tank of gas), and in good condition, and check weather and road conditions before a trip. Keep food, water, and blankets close to the driver if traveling alone.

- First-aid kit with manual
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Cell phone and phone card
- Roadside assistance card
- Portable radio and extra batteries
- Fire Extinguisher (5 lb A-B-C type)
- Extra fuses
- Flares or hazard reflectors
- Jumper cables
- Properly inflated spare tire
- Jack, lug wrench, tire gauge
- Basic tool kit
- Windshield scraper and brush
- Small folding shovel
- Sand for traction
- Duct tape
- Gloves, rags, paper towels
- List of important phone numbers
- Travel maps
- Waterproof matches and candles
- Whistle and small mirror
- Pen, pencil, paper
- Cash (bills and coins)
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable energy foods
- Disinfectant (bleach)
- Can opener
- Medications
- Toiletries
- Pre-moistened Wipes
- Good shoes
- Extra clothes, gloves, and hats
- Blankets or sleeping bag
- Flares, parking emergency triangles, etc.

Home Hazard Hunt

Check for Electrical Hazards

- Repair or replace damaged cords and plugs.
- Remove cords under rugs or over nails, pipes, or heaters.
- Use one plug per outlet; don't string surge protectors together.
- Put covers on outlets or electrical boxes.
- Repair/replace appliances that spark, smoke, or overheat.

Check for Chemical Hazards

- Store flammable chemicals in approved containers and a well-ventilated place outside your home.
- Store oily rags in covered metal containers.
- Limit quantities of household chemicals and store them out of reach of children.
- Separate reactive chemicals like bleach and ammonia.

Check for Fire Hazards

- Eliminate combustibles (yard waste, papers, rags, old mattresses).
- Separate heat sources (appliances, candles, portable heaters, etc.) and combustibles.
- Keep chimneys, flue pipes, vents, and vent connectors clean and in good repair.
- Keep portable heaters in low-traffic areas.

Safety Equipment

- Install a smoke alarm in each bedroom, hallway, and level of your home.
- Test monthly and replace batteries at least yearly.
- Learn how to use your ABC fire extinguisher.

Secure Large Items in Home

- Anchor water heater, large appliances, tall or heavy furniture, and pictures to studs in the wall.
- Install a flexible gas line on gas appliances.
- Store heavy objects on lower shelves; secure cabinet doors.
- Avoid placing beds under windows or heavy objects.
- Brace overhead light fixtures or fans.

Utilities

- Show responsible members of the family the location of utility shut-off valves and how to operate them.

Emergency Sanitation

After a major disaster, if water and sewage lines have been disrupted you may need to improvise emergency sanitation facilities.

Supplies

- Always have basic sanitation supplies on hand.
- Medium-sized plastic bucket with a tight lid
- Household chlorine bleach
- Toilet paper
- Plastic garbage bags and ties (heavy-duty)
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Towelettes

Sanitation

Build a makeshift toilet:

- If sewage lines are broken but the toilet bowl is usable, place a garbage bag inside the bowl.
- If the toilet is completely backed up, make your own.
 - Line a medium-sized bucket with a garbage bag.
 - Make a toilet seat out of two boards placed parallel to each other across the bucket (an old toilet seat will also work).

Sanitize Waste

- After each use, pour a disinfectant such as bleach into the container (this will stop the spread of disease).
- Cover the container tightly when not in use.

Waste Disposal

If the garbage can be buried immediately:

- Bury garbage and human waste to avoid the spread of disease by rats and insects.
- Dig a pit 2 to 3 feet deep and at least 50 feet downhill or away from any well, spring, or water supply.

If the garbage cannot be buried immediately:

- Strain any liquids into the emergency toilet.
- Wrap the residue in several layers of newspapers and store it in a large can with a tight-fitting lid.
- Place the can outside until it can be buried.

Evacuation

Several types of disasters may force you to be evacuated from your home. If you are told to evacuate, take the following steps:

- Listen carefully to instructions given by local officials.
- Evacuate immediately if told to do so.
- If you have time, grab your portable disaster (72-hour) kit.
 - Make sure that you include any last-minute items, such as prescription medication, that you may need.
- Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Lock your home.
- Use travel routes outlined by local officials (do not take shortcuts; they may be unsafe).
- Keep at least ½ tank of fuel in your car if evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies.
- If you go to a shelter, notify staff of any special needs that you may have.

Be prepared to leave your home if:

- Your area is without electrical power or water for an extended period.
- There is a chemical emergency affecting your area.
- Flood water is rising.
- A wildland fire is burning near your home.
- Your home has been severely damaged.
- Local officials tell you to evacuate.

Evacuations are more common than people realize. Hundreds of times each year, individuals are evacuated for various reasons including transportation and industrial accidents, fires, floods, etc.

Shelter-In-Place

Shelter-in-Place simply means staying inside your home or business. During an accidental release of toxic chemicals, or emergencies involving hazardous materials where air quality may be threatened, shelter-in-place keeps you inside a protected area and out of danger.

If shelter-in-place is necessary you will be notified by local authorities. If you are asked to shelter in place, take the following steps:

- Take your children and pets inside immediately. While gathering your family, cover your mouth and nose with a damp cloth to provide a minimal amount of protection.
- Close all windows and doors in your home as well as the fireplace damper. Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems, and any other ventilation.
- Go to an above-ground room (not the basement) with the fewest windows and doors (take a battery-operated radio with you).
- Wet some towels and jam them in the crack under the door.
- Close drapes, or shades over windows and stay away from windows.
- Stay in the room and listen to your radio until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate.
- Once you are told to stop sheltering in place, vent your house by opening windows and turning on fans.

It is a good idea to take your 72-hour kit with you as you shelter in place.

Accidental Poisoning

Before Poisoning

- Place the poison control number near the phone (1-800-222-1222).
- Do not leave children alone or unattended.
- Be aware of all potential hazards in your home.
- Never call medicine “candy”.
- Teach children to ask before putting anything in their mouths.
- Keep activated charcoal on hand.

After Poisoning

- Stay calm.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- Follow the Poison Control Center’s instructions.

Inhaled Poisoning

- Immediately get the victim to fresh air.
- Avoid breathing fumes.
- Open doors and windows wide.
- If the victim is not breathing, have someone call 911, then start CPR.

Poison on the Skin

- Remove contaminated clothing.
- Flood skin with water for ten minutes.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- Follow the Poison Control Center’s Instructions.

Poison in the Eye

- Flood the eye with lukewarm (not hot) water poured from a large glass two or three inches from the eye.
- Repeat the process for 15 minutes.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- Follow the Poison Control Center’s Instructions.

Swallowed Poison

- Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink.
- Call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
- Follow the Poison Control Center’s instructions.

Coping with Disasters

Physical and emotional reactions often occur as a result of a natural emergency or traumatic event. These reactions may happen immediately or weeks or months after an event. Traumatic stress reactions can happen to people of any age and can change a person's behavior, thoughts, and physical health.

Common Responses

The physical effects caused by a traumatic event include:

- Rapid heartbeat
- Increased respiratory rate
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Muscle and joint aches
- Tremors
- Headaches

Seek medical attention if any of these symptoms persist.

Thoughts, behaviors, and emotions may also change. These changes include:

- Flashbacks or re-experiencing the event.
- Withdrawal from normal social relations.
- Performance problems at work or school.
- Loss or increase in appetite.
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares.
- Feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, numb.
- Being extremely anxious, fearful, agitated or irritable.
- Feeling depressed.
- Increased consumption of alcohol, prescribed, over-the-counter, or illicit drugs.

What You Can Do for Yourself

There are many things you can do to cope with traumatic events.

- Understand that your symptoms may be normal, especially right after the trauma.
- Keep to your usual routine.
- Take the time to resolve day-to-day conflicts so they do not add to your stress.
- Do not shy away from situations, people and places that remind you of the trauma.
- Find ways to relax and be kind to yourself.
- Turn to family, friends, and clergy for support, and talk about your experiences and feelings with them.
- Participate in leisure and recreational activities (exercise helps as well).
- Recognize that you cannot control everything.
- Recognize the need for trained help and call a local mental health center.

What You Can Do For Your Child

- Let your child know that it is okay to feel upset when something bad or scary happens.
- Encourage your child to express feelings and thoughts without making judgments.
- Return to daily routines.

Animals and Disasters

Your animals need to be included in your family disaster plan since they depend on you for their well-being. Your list of emergency phone numbers should include your veterinarian and your local animal shelter.

Pets

- If you must evacuate, DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND! More than likely, they will not survive.
- Some shelters for both animals and people will not be able to take your pet so take pet records with you in case you must board them, etc.
- Ensure your pets have their identification on them (tags, etc.).
- Ensure you have a secure pet leash and the disaster supply kit resources for your pet (food, water, medications, records of veterinarian and tags, litter box, dishes, first aid kit, information sheet).
- If you must leave your pets behind, leave them in a safe place inside with a notice on the house regarding pets inside (provide contact information; leave plenty of food and water; never chain them outside).
- Have a backup plan if you are not around when an evacuation occurs such as with a trusted neighbor to take your pets with them. Ensure such neighbors are comfortable with your pets.

Livestock

- Evacuate livestock whenever possible.
- Prepare in advance for an emergency transport of livestock and a destination point prearranged, ensuring food, water, veterinary care, etc.
- If evacuation is not possible, a decision must be made to move large animals to shelter or turn them loose outside (ensure some form of identification on the animal).

Wildlife

- Wild or stray domestic animals can pose a danger during many types of disasters.
- Do not corner an animal.
- If available, contact animal control authorities.

Making a plan with your neighbors saves lives. Your district may organize to support each other during an emergency.

Children and Disasters

Children experience trauma and fear during a natural disaster. If they know what to do during a disaster because they have practiced family disaster drills, they will be better off. When parents and elders are calm, children calm down more quickly.

Before a Disaster

Parents and elders can:

- Familiarize yourself with the emergency response plans of schools and /or daycare your children attend and the buses they ride and understand the school/daycare/bus protocol that will occur if there is an emergency.
- Establish protocols for children if they arrive home from school when no one else is home and an emergency occurs.
- Develop and practice a family disaster plan.
- Teach children how to recognize danger signals.
- Explain how to call for help.
- Help children memorize important family information.
- Help children memorize their address if they have one or their physical location.
- Include a child's favorite toy or special foods in the 72-hour kit.

After a Disaster

Children are most afraid the disaster will happen again, someone will be hurt or killed, and they will be separated from their family and left alone. Parents and elders can help minimize their children's fear by:

- Keeping the family together and not leaving children with other relatives, neighbors, or friends.
- Calmly and firmly explain the situation and your plans.
- Talk to your children at eye level.
- Encourage children to talk about the disaster and ask questions.
- Include children in recovery activities by giving them chores that help them feel they are helping things get back to normal.
- Reassure children with firmness and love.
- Sympathize with and resolve their anxieties.
- Hold your child and spend more time with them.

Family Emergency Information

Local Emergency Numbers: _____

Family Members

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

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Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Name _____ DOB _____ Blood Type _____

Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____ (Other) _____

Child/Adult Care _____ Phone _____
 Child/Adult Care _____ Phone _____
 Child/Adult Care _____ Phone _____
 Child's School _____ Phone _____
 Child's School _____ Phone _____
 Child's School _____ Phone _____
 Child's School _____ Phone _____
 Child's School _____ Phone _____

Out-of-Town Contacts

Name _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ Phone _____

Rally Points

In hometown _____ Phone _____
 Address _____

In hometown _____ Phone _____
 Address _____

Out-of-Town _____ Phone _____
 Address _____

Out-of-Town _____ Phone _____
 Address _____

Medical Information

Doctor _____ Phone _____
 Doctor _____ Phone _____
 Dentist _____ Phone _____
 Pharmacy _____ Phone _____
 Veterinarian _____ Phone _____

Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____
Name _____	Medication _____	Dose _____

Elderly/Special Needs and Disasters

People with disabilities should take extra precautions when preparing for a disaster. Make sure there is someone you can call on such as a neighbor, etc.

When planning for the care of the elderly and those with special needs, please consider the following recommendations:

- Establish a close network of relatives and friends who can assist your family in an emergency.
- Make sure neighbors or helpers know where to find your disaster kit, medicines, etc.
- Wear a medical alert tag or bracelet.
- Compose a list of special items and have ready for an emergency such as in your kit:
 - Medications
 - Prosthetic devices
 - List of style and serial numbers of medical devices
 - Extra eyeglasses and a record of prescriptions
 - Extra oxygen
 - Extra pillows, bedding
 - Medical insurance, cards, etc.
 - Backup power supplies or generators
 - Manual wheelchair
 - Hearing aids, batteries

Earthquakes

Before an Earthquake

- Secure the water heater, storage shelves, heavy mirrors, shelves, etc. to walls.
- Know where and how to shut off utilities of electricity, gas, and water (main valves, switches, etc.).
- Have earthquake drills and identify safe spots in each room.
- Have an out-of-state contact person.
- Develop a plan for reuniting family members after the earthquake.
- Review your insurance policies.
- Keep a good pair of shoes and a flashlight near your bed.
- Prepare to survive on your own for at least three days.

During An Earthquake

- If inside, stay inside and find protection in a doorway, or crouch under a desk or table, away from windows, glass, brick walls, and chimneys.
- If outside, stand away from buildings, trees, telephones, and electric lines.
- If on the road, drive away from underpasses or overpasses; stop in a safe area; stay in your vehicle.
- If in an office building, stay next to a pillar or column, or under a heavy table or desk.
- Stay where you are until the shaking has stopped and you are sure it is safe to move.

After An Earthquake

- Check for injuries and provide first aid.
- Check for fires; gas, water, sewage breaks; downed electric lines; building damage, and potential problems from aftershocks, such as cracks around the fireplace and foundation. Turn off interrupted utilities as necessary.
- Clean up dangerous spills.
- Wear shoes and leather gloves.
- Tune a radio to an emergency station and listen for public emergency broadcast announcements.
- Use the telephone only for emergencies.
- As soon as possible, notify family that you are safe.
- Do not use matches or open flames until you are sure there are not any gas leaks as a result of impacts from the shock(s).
- Do not turn the light on and off, creating sparks and ignition sources for gas leaks.
- In public buildings, follow evacuation procedures immediately and return after the building has been declared safe by the appropriate authorities.
- Most injuries during an earthquake occur from falling objects or structures or downed electrical wires so stay clear if possible. Earthquakes can strike at any time and without warning. They are almost always followed by aftershocks that can be even larger than the initial shock.

Winter Storms

Before a Storm

- Arrange for an emergency heat supply in case of power failure.
- Prepare auto, battery-powered equipment, food, heating fuel, and other supplies.
- Prepare a car winter survival kit (refer to Prepare Your Vehicle section) and keep the car fuel tank half full.

During and After the Storm

- At home, stay in your house; use your emergency supplies kit and avoid travel.
- Dress warmly and wear multiple layers of protective, loose-fitting clothing, scarves, mittens, and hoods.
- If in the cold, cover your mouth and nose to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Avoid overexertion; heart attacks are a major cause of death during and after storms (shoveling has led to heart attacks, so don't overdo it).
- Beware of the chill factor if winds are present.
- Be prepared for isolation at home and make sure you can survive for a week or two in case a storm isolates you and makes it impossible for you to leave.

If Trapped in Your Car

- Stay in your car for visibility and warmth; do not try to walk out.
- Use a candle for warmth.
- Run the motor for only 10 minutes each hour for heat with the rear window open slightly for ventilation.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked.
- Change position frequently.
- Stay alert and do not let all occupants of the car sleep at once.
- About 70% of winter deaths related to snow and ice occur in automobiles. Travel by car in daylight, don't travel alone, keep others notified of your schedule, and stay on main roads.

High Winds

Before High Winds

- Survey your property, taking note of materials stored, placed, or used that could become missiles and destroy other structures or be destroyed.
- Devise methods of securing these items where they will still be accessible for day-to-day needs.
- Keep trees properly pruned away from power lines.
- Keep radio and/or TV on and monitor for wind advisories.
- If possible, board up, tape, or cover all windows but leave some ventilation.
- Store water in case water service is interrupted.
- Have a supply of flashlights, spare batteries, candles, first aid equipment, medicines, etc. available for use.
- Have plastic sheeting available in case the roof is damaged and it begins to rain.
- Secure outdoor furniture, trash cans, tools, etc.
- Take pictures of the house/yard, and inside possessions for possible insurance purposes.

During High Winds

- Take shelter in hallways and closets; avoid windows.
- If outside, take shelter from flying debris.

After Winds Subside

- Inspect your home for structural and roof damage.
- Check all utilities and power lines for damage and proper operation.
- Monitor radio and TV for instructions from local leaders.

Because of its varied terrain and climate, Idaho can experience a variety of severe weather conditions. In a typical year, Idaho can experience everything from blizzards to tornadoes. Winter storms can knock out power and make for slick and icy driving conditions. Avalanches and lightning strikes have claimed the lives of many outdoor adventurers. Flash flooding has caused damage to several areas. Dense fog and windstorms have also caused extensive damage

Thunderstorms and Lightning

Protect Yourself

- Get inside a home or large building when a storm approaches. Stay indoors and don't venture outside unless necessary.
- Stay away from open doors, windows, fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks and appliances.
- Do not use electrical appliances (use surge protectors to protect equipment).
- Use the telephone for emergencies only.

If you are outside with no time to reach a safe building or vehicle:

- Do not stand under a natural lightning rod such as a tall tree in an open area.
- In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
- In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley (be alert for flash floods).
- Do not stand on a hilltop, in an open field, on the beach, or in a boat on the water.
- Avoid isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Get out of the water and off small boats.
- Get away from anything metal-tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, bicycles, camping chairs, etc.
- Stay away from wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes, rails, exposed sheds, or anything that is high and could conduct electricity (can carry electricity to you from some distance away).
- When you feel an electrical charge, such as through your hair standing on end and your skin tingling, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet and place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees (do not lie on the ground).
- Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.

Flooding

Before a Flood

- Know the elevation of your property in relation to flood plains, streams, and other waterways. Determine if your property may be flooded.
- Plan what to do and where to go in case of a flood.
- Prepare a Family Emergency Supplies Kit – 72-Hour Kit.
- Fill your car with gas in case you have to evacuate.
- Move furniture and essential items to higher elevations, if time permits.
- Have a portable radio and flashlights with extra batteries.
- Secure your home.
- Consider flood and earthquake insurance.

Evacuation

- Listen to local radio or TV for weather information.
- If asked to evacuate, shut off the main power switch, main gas valve, and water valve. Follow local evacuation plans and routes.
- Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road; it may be washed out. While on the road, watch for possible flooding of bridges, dips, and low areas.
- Watch out for damaged roads, slides and fallen wires.
- Drive slowly in water; use low gear.
- Abandon your vehicle immediately if it stalls and seek higher ground.
- Do not attempt to cross a stream on foot where water is above your knees.
- Register at your designated evacuation center and remain there until informed you may leave.

After a Flood

- Remain away from the evacuated area until public health officials and building inspectors have given approval.
- Check for structural damage before entering.
- Make sure the electricity is off, watch for electrical wires.
- Do not use open flame as a light source because of the possibility of escaping gas. Use flashlights. Beware of dangerous sparks. Do not use food contaminated by flood water.
- Test drinking water for suitability with test kits.
- Avoid walking in flood water. Do not let children play in flood water.

Wildland Fires

Before a Wildfire

To prepare for wildfires, you should:

- Mark the entrance to your property with address signs that are visible from the road.
- Keep lawns trimmed, leaves raked, and the roof and rain gutters free from debris such as dead limbs and leaves.
- Stack firewood at least 30 feet away from your residence.
- Store flammable materials, liquids, and solvents in metal containers outside your residence at least 30 feet away from structures and wooden fences.
- Create defensible space by trimming trees and brush within 30 feet around your residence. Beyond 30 feet, remove dead wood, debris, and low tree branches.
- Landscape your property with fire-resistant plants and vegetation to prevent fire from spreading quickly. For example, hardwood trees are more fire-resistant than pine, evergreen, or fir trees.
- Make sure water sources, such as hydrants, ponds, swimming pools, and wells are accessible to the fire department.
- Use fire-resistant, protective roofing and materials like stone, brick, and metal to protect your residence. Avoid using wood materials. They offer the least fire protection.
- Cover all exterior vents, attics, and eaves with metal mesh screens no larger than 6 millimeters or ¼ inch to prevent debris from collecting and to help keep sparks out.
- Install multi-pane windows, tempered safety glass, or fireproof shutters to protect large windows from radiant heat.
- Use fire-resistant draperies for added window protection.
- Have chimneys, wood stove, and all home heating systems inspected and cleaned annually by a certified specialist.
- Insulate chimneys and place spark arresters on top. The chimney should be at least 3 feet above the roof.
- Remove branches hanging above and around the chimney.

Follow Local Burning Laws

- Before burning debris in a wooded area, make sure you notify local authorities, obtain a burning permit, and follow these guidelines.
- Use an approved incinerator with a safety lid covering with holes no larger than ¾ inch.
- Create at least a 10-foot clearing around the incinerator before burning debris.
- Have a fire extinguisher or garden hose on hand when burning debris.

During a Wildfire

If a wildfire threatens your home and time permits, take the following precautions:

- Shut off gas at the meter. Only a qualified professional can safely turn the gas back on.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Turn off propane tanks.

- Place combustible patio furniture inside.
- Connect a garden hose to outside taps. Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near above-ground fuel tanks. Wet the roof.
- Wet or remove shrubs within 15 feet of your residence.
- Gather fire tools such as a rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, bucket, and shovel.
- Back your car into the garage or park it in an open space facing the direction of escape. Shut doors and roll up windows. Leave the key in the ignition and the car doors unlocked. Close garage windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Disconnect automatic garage door openers.
- Open fireplace damper. Close fireplace screens.
- Close windows, vents, doors, blinds or noncombustible window coverings, and heavy drapers. Remove flammable drapes and curtains.
- Move flammable furniture into the center of the residence away from windows and sliding-glass doors.
- Close all interior doors and windows to prevent drafts.
- Place valuables that will not be damaged by water in a pool or pond.

If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Choose a route away from the fire hazard. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of the fire and smoke.

House Fires

Before a Fire

- Make sure home is free of unnecessary combustible materials.
- Do not store flammable liquids inside the home.
- Do not run wires under carpets or rugs.
- Do not store matches or cigarette lighters where children can get them.
- Do not leave cooking unattended.
- If you smoke, do not smoke in bed or in other positions where you may fall asleep. Also have many large ashtrays in the home.
- Know avenues of escape. Always have two ways out of every room.
- Have a place to meet so no one tries to go back into a burning building to look for someone needlessly.
- Have fire extinguishers near the kitchen and the garage.
- Have escape ladders for all windows higher than eight feet off the ground.
- Install a smoke detector in every bedroom, in every hallway outside of a bedroom, and at least one on every level of the house. Test the smoke detector monthly. Change the batteries in the smoke detectors in the fall when you change your clock from daylight savings time.
- Plan and practice a family fire drill on the first of each month. A good plan will have a place to meet, two ways out of every room, and escape ladders.

During a Fire

- If you are outside, stay outside. Do not return for anything. Do not re-enter the building until appropriate authorities have given permission.
- If you are inside, get out. Go to the nearest house or building and call 911. Report the address and type of fire. Listen to and follow instructions. Go to the family meeting place.
- If you are inside and have time, make sure everyone is out.
- If you are in a closed room or office, do not open the door without first feeling it or the door knob. If it is warm or hot, do not open it, but unlock it to help rescue or fire personnel.
- If there is smoke, get under the smoke, no matter how low it is, and get out of the building.
- If you cannot use the door or other means of escape to exit and there is smoke, use clothes, sheets, etc. to stop the smoke from coming in. Go to the window and yell or blow a whistle.
- If you see someone on fire, use a coat or blanket, but not your bare hands to smother the flames. Watch to see that nobody goes back inside to rescue anything or anyone.
- If possible, turn off the gas and electricity from outside the house.
- In a public building, know two ways out. If you hear a fire alarm, immediately exit the building regardless of what you are doing. Follow the established evacuation instructions. Each year more than 4,000 Americans die and more than 25,000 are injured in fires, many of which could be prevented due to non-functioning fire alarms.

Power Outages

Home Electrical Circuits

- Familiarize yourself with the location of the electrical breaker panel.
- Turn off breakers for areas of concern.
- If in doubt, shut off the main breaker. Check your house's electrical meter. If it is in your home, there may be a main disconnect breaker next to it. If the meter is on an underground service, it may be in front of your home. But there should be a main breaker where the line enters the home.
- Be sure and show others in the family where the breakers are located in case of an emergency
- In case of basement flooding:
 - Think before stepping in any water.
 - A shock hazard may exist even in an inch of water.
 - If the electrical panel is upstairs, shut off all circuits.
 - If the electrical panel is in the basement, determine whether it can be reached on DRY ground. If not, shut off the main breaker.

Before a Power Outage

- Learn the location of the fuse box or circuit breaker.
- Store candles, flashlights, and extra batteries in convenient places.
- Have food and water supplies on hand.
- Know the location of all camping equipment, stoves, lanterns, and sleeping bags. Make sure the equipment is operational and that you know how to use it. Use camping equipment requiring gasoline, propane, and white fuel. Use Coleman fuel or charcoal briquettes outside only.
- Keep the refrigerator well defrosted.
- Purchase & install approved surge protectors for appliances and electronics.

During the Power Outage

- Unplug all your electronic equipment if you do not have surge protectors. A power surge could ruin appliances when power is restored.
- Turn off all but one light switch.
- Open the refrigerator door only to take food out, close as quickly as possible.
- Use camping equipment outside, six feet away from everything. Use only a fireplace properly installed wood stove or a new style kerosene heater in a safe area with fresh outside air coming into the area.
- Report any downed lines.
- Do not allow children to carry lanterns, candles or fuel.

After the Power Outage

- When power is restored, plug in appliances one by one, waiting a few minutes between each one. This will prevent overloading the system.
- Be patient, Energy may first be restored to police and fire departments and critical infrastructure.
- Examine your frozen food. If it still contains ice crystals it may be refrozen. If meat is off color or has an odd odor, throw it away.

Gas Leaks

Emergency Control of Gas

- If you detect the smell of natural gas, leave your house immediately. Do not use any electrical device.
- Check house piping, appliances, and vents for damage.
- Check for fires or fire hazards.
- Do not use matches, lighters, or other open flames.
- Do not operate electrical switches, appliances, or battery-operated devices if you suspect natural gas leaks. This could create sparks that could ignite gas from broken lines.
- If gas line breakage is suspected, evacuate immediately and shut off the gas at the meter.
- Wear heavy shoes in all areas near broken glass or debris. Keep your head and face protected from falling debris.
- Turn on a battery-operated radio if no gas leaks are found or a car radio to receive disaster instructions.
- Do not use your telephone except in extreme emergency situations.
- Call 911 from a neighbor's house.

Explosions

If There is an Explosion

- Take shelter against your desk or a sturdy table. Exit the building as soon as possible.
- Do not use elevators.
- Check for fire and other hazards.
- Take your emergency supply kit if time allows.
- Help others and provide first aid as necessary.

If There is a Fire

- Exit the building as soon as possible.
- Crawl low if there is smoke.
- Use a wet cloth, if possible, to cover your nose and mouth.
- Use the back of your hand to feel the upper, lower, and middle parts of closed doors.
- If the door is not hot, brace yourself against it and open it slowly.
- If the door is hot, do not open it, Look for another way out.
- Do not use elevators.
- If you catch on fire, do not run, STOP, DROP and ROLL to put out the fire.
- If you are at home, go to a previously designated meeting place.
- Account for your family members and carefully supervise small children.
- Never go back into a burning building.

If You are Trapped in Debris

- If possible use a flashlight to signal your location to rescuers.
- Avoid unnecessary movement so that you don't kick up dust.
- Cover your nose and mouth with anything you have on hand. (Dense-weave cotton material can act as a good filter. Try to breathe through the material).
- Tap on a pipe or wall so that rescuers can hear where you are.
- If possible, use a whistle to signal rescuers.
- Shout only as a last resort, shouting can cause a person to inhale a dangerous amount of dust.

Hazardous Materials Incidents

Before an Incident

- Be prepared to evacuate. An evacuation could last for a few hours to several days.
- Be prepared to shelter-in-place.
- Keep your 72-hour kits updated.

During an Incident

- Stay away from the incident to minimize the risk of contamination.
- Remain uphill and upwind from the source of the hazardous materials.
- If asked to evacuate your home, do so immediately.
- Shelter-in-place if requested to stay indoors.
- Schools may institute shelter-in-place procedures if there is a hazardous materials incident. If so, you will probably not be able to drive to the school to pick up your children. Follow the directions of your local Public Safety department.
- Avoid contact with spilled liquids, air-borne mists, or condensed solid chemical deposits.

After an Incident

- Do not return home until you are told it is safe.
- When you get home, open windows and vents and turn on fans to ventilate your house.
- Find out from local authorities how to clean up your land and property.
- Report any lingering vapors or hazards.

Household Chemical Emergencies

Before a Household Chemical Emergency

- Buy only as much of a chemical as you think you will use.
- Keep products containing hazardous materials in their original containers and never remove the labels unless the container is corroding.
- Never store hazardous products in food containers.
- Never mix household hazardous chemicals or waste with other products.

Take the Following Precautions to Prevent and Respond to Accidents:

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the proper use of the household chemical.

Never smoke while using household chemicals.

Never use hair spray, cleaning solutions, paint products, or pesticides near an open flame.

Clean up any chemical spill immediately. Use rags to clean up the spill. Wear gloves and eye protection. Allow the fumes in the rags to evaporate outdoors then dispose of the rags by wrapping them in a newspaper and placing them in a sealed plastic bag in your trash can.

Dispose of hazardous materials correctly. Take household hazardous waste to a local collection program.

During a Household Chemical Emergency

- Be prepared to seek medical assistance. Call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222 and follow directions.

If There is a Danger of Fire Explosion

- Get out of the residence immediately. Do not waste time collecting items or calling the fire department when you are in danger. Call 911 once you are safely away from the danger.
- Stay upwind and away from the residence to avoid breathing toxic fumes.

If Someone has Been Exposed to a Household Chemical

- Find any containers of the substance that are readily available in order to provide requested information. Call emergency medical services.
- Follow the emergency operator or dispatcher's first aid instructions carefully. The first aid advice found on containers may be out of date or inappropriate. Do not give anything by mouth unless advised to do so by a medical professional or poison control.

Nuclear Emergency

During a Nuclear Emergency

- If you have advanced warning, take your 72-hour kit and go to an approved shelter or your basement. Huddle close to the floor and as near to a wall as possible. Get under a table for protection from falling objects.
- DO NOT attempt to evacuate your shelter until advised.
- If you see a nuclear flash and feel sudden heat, take cover INSTANTLY, within one to two seconds. Drop to the ground and curl up tightly, covering as many parts of your body as possible. Go to a shelter once the heat and blast effects have cleared.
- Never look at the light of a nuclear explosion.

After a Nuclear Emergency

- Take cover in an underground shelter, basement, etc.
- Remove contaminated clothing
- Wash yourself thoroughly with soap and water.
- Wash your head and nose hairs especially well.
- If the source of radiation is known and travel is advisable, travel in the opposite direction and go upwind from radiation.
- Remain in a protective shelter until advised it is safe to leave. Limit your exposure to contaminated areas.
- If someone needs radiation sickness treatment, keep the victim calm. Give emotional support and plenty of fluids.
- Wipe food and water containers with a clean cloth to remove particles of fallout, which resemble sand or salt.

Radiological Event

A radiation threat commonly referred to as a “dirty bomb” or “radiological dispersion device (RDD)” is the use of common explosives to spread radioactive materials over a targeted area. It is not a nuclear blast. The force of the explosion and radioactive contamination will be more localized. While the blast will be immediately obvious, the presence of radiation will not be clearly defined until trained personnel with specialized equipment are on the scene. As with any radiation, you want to try to limit exposure. It is important to avoid breathing radiological dust that may be released in the air.

If there is a Radiation Threat or “Dirty Bomb”

- If you are outside and there is an explosion or authorities warn of a radiation release nearby, cover your nose and mouth, and quickly go inside a building that has not been damaged. If you are already inside, check to see if your building has been damaged. If your building is stable, stay where you are. Close windows and doors, and turn off air conditioners, heaters, or other ventilation systems.
- If you are inside and there is an explosion near where you are OR you are warned of a radiation release inside, cover your nose and mouth and go outside immediately. Look for a building or other shelter that has not been damaged and quickly get inside. Once you are inside a safe building, close windows and doors; turn off air conditioners, heaters, or other ventilation systems.
- If you think you have been exposed to radiation, take off your clothes (place outdoors in a container) and shower as soon as possible. Wash thoroughly around the mouth and nose.
- Stay where you are, watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the internet for official news as it becomes available.

Remember

- To limit the amount of radiation you are exposed to, think about shielding, distance and time.
- Shielding: IF YOU have a thick shield between yourself and the radioactive materials more of the radiation will be absorbed, and you will be exposed to less.
- Distance: The farther away you are away from the blast and the fallout (dust and debris) the lower your exposure.
- Time: Minimizing time spent exposed will also reduce your risk.

Terrorism

Preparing for Terrorism

- Wherever you are, be aware of your surroundings. The very nature of terrorism suggests there may be little or no warning.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended. Unusual behavior, suspicious packages, and strange devices should be promptly reported to the police or security personnel.
- Do not be afraid to move or leave if you feel uncomfortable or if something does not seem right.
- Learn where emergency exits are located in buildings you frequent. Take note of where exits are when you enter an unfamiliar building. Also, find out where staircases are located.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit at home and learn first aid.

Chemical Attack

- Signs of a chemical attack would include many people suffering from watery eyes, choking and having trouble breathing, and many sick or dead birds, fish, and small animals. If you suspect a chemical attack has occurred:
- Avoid the contaminated area. Get away from the area or shelter in place, using the option that minimizes your exposure to the chemical.
- Wash with soap and water immediately if you are exposed to a chemical.
- Seek medical attention.
- Notify local law enforcement or health authorities.

Biological Attack

A biological attack may not be immediately obvious. Patterns of unusual illnesses or a surge of sick people seeking medical treatment may be the first signs of an attack. If you believe there has been a suspicious release of biological substances:

- Quickly get away from the area.
- Cover your mouth and nose with layers of fabric, such as a t-shirt or towel.
- Wash with soap and water.
- Contact local law enforcement or health authorities.
- The CDC has listed the following agents as Category A agents, meaning they pose the greatest potential public health threat: anthrax, botulism, plague, smallpox, tularemia anti-viral hemorrhagic fevers.

Pandemic Influenza

A pandemic is a worldwide disease outbreak. An Influenza pandemic occurs when a new “Influenza A” virus emerges and there is little or no immunity in humans. A pandemic influenza virus causes serious illness and then spreads easily from person to person. It could be mild, moderate, or very severe even leading to death. The Federal Government and the State of Idaho have taken steps to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic.

If a pandemic occurs, it is likely to last several months or possibly even longer. A widespread outbreak of influenza could require temporary changes in many areas of society, such as schools, work, transportation, and other public services. Social distancing measures could be implemented where public gatherings such as sporting events, church meetings, and others would be closed to prevent further spread of the disease. An informed and prepared public can take appropriate actions to decrease their risk during a pandemic. To be prepared for such an emergency, the Department of Public Safety encourages individuals and families to:

- Talk with Southeastern Idaho Public Health and your other healthcare providers who can supply information about the signs and symptoms of a specific disease outbreak and recommend prevention and control actions.
- Adopt work/school procedures that encourage sick employees/students to stay home. Anticipate how to function with a significant portion of the workforce/school population absent due to illness or caring for ill family members.
- Practice good health habits, including eating a balanced diet, exercising daily, and getting sufficient rest. In addition, take common-sense steps to stop the spread of germs including frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes and staying away from others as much as possible when you are sick.
- Stay informed about pandemic influenza and be prepared to respond. Consult www.pandemicflu.gov frequently for updates on national and international information on pandemic influenza.
- Have a plan: stock up on supplies for an emergency; make a list of every member of your family and their medical problems, prescriptions (doses), allergies, etc.
- If the pandemic is severe and widespread, you may be asked to stay away from work, school, churches, public gatherings, stores may be closed, and health care may be overwhelmed and hard to obtain.

Landslides

Landslides, also known as mudslides and debris flow, may occur in all parts of Idaho and can be caused by a variety of factors including earthquakes, storms, and fires. Landslides can occur quickly, often with little notice. The best way to prepare for a mudslide is to stay informed about changes in and around your home and area that could signal that a landslide is likely to occur. Look for changes in landscape and water drainage, or new cracks in foundations and sidewalks.

Prepare for landslides by following proper land-use procedures; avoid building near steep slopes or along natural erosion valleys.

Consult a professional for advice on appropriate preventative measures for your home or business, such as flexible pipe fittings, which can better resist breakage.

Stay informed as local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. You should listen to NOAA Weather Radio, watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

Additional Resources

United States Department of Homeland Security

www.ready.gov

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Idaho Office of Emergency Management

<https://ioem.idaho.gov>

Idaho Department of Health

www.health.idaho.gov

Center for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/orr/infographics/pfe-family.htm>

American Red Cross Prepare for Emergencies

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/make-a-plan.html>

FEMA Emergency Financial First Aid Kit

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-financial-first-aid-kit>

Idaho Office of Emergency Management Personal and Family Preparedness

<https://ioem.idaho.gov/preparedness-and-protection/personal-family-preparedness/>

Idaho Power “Be Prepared for Outages”

<https://www.idahopower.com/outages-safety/outages/be-prepared/>

Idaho Power “Be Prepared for Wildfire Season”

<https://www.idahopower.com/outages-safety/wildfire-safety/be-prepared-for-wildfire-season/>

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Emergency Preparedness

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/health-wellness/emergency-planning/emergency-preparedness>

American Association of Retired Persons Disaster Preparedness

<https://www.aarp.org/home-family/your-home/info-2020/emergency-preparedness>

National Weather Service – Weather Ready Nation

https://www.weather.gov/wrn/winter_safety