

FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN CHECKLIST

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act and local first responders may not be able to reach you right away. **PREPARE NOW** for a sudden emergency and discuss these ideas with your entire family to create a **Family Emergency Plan**.

Even though this checklist looks long and scary, it is easy to do and can help you make a plan. We suggest you and your family review this list, then read through the Manual since there are many tips mentioned in various topics and Sections that could help develop your plan.

PLEASE make some time in your busy lives to prepare for a disaster... a few minutes now could possibly save a life when a disaster hits. Remember - **be aware... be prepared... and have a plan!**

LEARN ABOUT RISKS & EXISTING PLANS:

(See Section 4 for phone numbers of State & Provincial Emergency Management offices and Red Cross - or check city/county white pages)

- [] Find out which disasters could occur in your area and ask officials how to prepare for each disaster... but read this Manual first.
- [] Ask how you will be warned of an emergency.
- [] Learn your community's evacuation routes and map them out using a free online service like Google Maps or Mapquest.
- [] Ask about special assistance for elderly or disabled persons.
- [] Ask your workplace about emergency plans and learn about plans at your children's school(s) or day care center(s).

TIPS ON MAKING YOUR FAMILY PLAN:

*(Review all and complete **Family Emergency Plan** on pages 12-13):*

- [] Meet with household members to talk about the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes and other emergencies. Explain how to respond to each using the tips in this Manual.
- [] Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster that affects your community. *(see Section 2 for explanations of each disaster)*
- [] Talk about what to do when there are power outages and injuries.

- [] Take a basic first aid and CPR class (or join a CERT - see page 224).
- [] Draw a floor plan of your home showing doors, windows and stairways. Mark locations of first aid and disaster kits, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, ladders, and utility shut-off points. Next, use a colored pen to draw a broken line charting at least 2 escape routes from each room. And practice drills!
- [] Show family members how to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches when necessary.
- [] Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones and teach children how and when to call 9-1-1. (*see Section 3*)
- [] Make sure household members understand they should turn on the radio for emergency information.
- [] Pick one out-of-state and a local friend or relative for family members to call if separated during a disaster. (It is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area.)
- [] Pick two emergency meeting places in case you can't go home:
 - 1) A place near your home.
 - 2) A place outside the neighborhood.
- [] Teach children meeting places and emergency phone numbers in case you get separated during a crisis.
- [] Put **ICE** before a name and number in cell phone address books so First Responders would know who to call "**In Case of Emergency**".
- [] Make sure family members know how to send and receive photos and text messages (if you have those capabilities on your cells). Also consider joining a network like Twitter or a local text message alert system to receive emergency broadcast warnings, updates, etc.
- [] Get some FRS walkie-talkies and teach family how to use them.
- [] Practice emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least two times each year.
- [] Consider doing a Living Will and/or a Healthcare Power of Attorney.
- [] Keep family records in a water- and fire-proof container. Consider keeping another set of records in a safety deposit box offsite.
- [] Check if you have enough insurance coverage. (*see Section 2 for more information on flood insurance.*)

and winter storms include damaging winds. And certain parts of the world experience high winds on a normal basis due to wind patterns.

Realize when extreme winds strike they are not constant - they rapidly increase and decrease. A home in the path of wind causes the wind to change direction. This change in wind direction increases pressure on parts of the house creating stress which causes the connections between building components to fail. For example, the roof or siding can be pulled off or the windows can be pushed in.

Strengthen weak spots on home

Experts believe there are four areas of your home that should be checked for weakness -- the roof, windows, doors and garage doors. Homeowners can take some steps to secure and strengthen these areas but some things should be done by an experienced builder or contractor.

ROOF:

- Truss bracing or gable end bracing (supports placed strategically to strengthen the roof)
- Anchors, clips and straps can be installed (may want to call a professional since sometimes difficult to install)

WINDOWS and DOORS:

- Storm shutters (for windows, French doors, sliding glass doors, and skylights) or keep plywood on hand
- Reinforced bolt kits for doors

GARAGE DOORS:

- Certain parts of the country have building codes requiring garage doors to withstand high winds (check with local building officials)
- Some garage doors can be strengthened with retrofit kits (involves installing horizontal bracing onto each panel)

Secure mobile homes

Make sure your trailer or mobile home is securely anchored. Consult the manufacturer for information on secure tiedown systems.

Secure or tie down loose stuff

Extreme winds can also cause damage from flying debris that can act like missiles and ram through walls, windows or the roof if the wind speeds are high enough. You should consider securing large or heavy equipment inside and out to reduce some of the flying debris like patio furniture, barbeque grills, water heaters, garbage cans, bookcases and shelving, etc.

Consider building a shelter or “safe room”

Shelters or “safe rooms” are designed to provide protection from the high winds expected during hurricanes, tornadoes and from flying debris. Shelters built below ground provide the best protection, but be aware they could be flooded during heavy rains.

FEMA provides an excellent free booklet called “Taking Shelter From the Storm: Building a Safe Room Inside Your House” developed in association with the Wind Engineering Research Center at Texas Tech University. Learn more by visiting www.fema.gov [*do a search on safe rooms*]

WINTER STORM & EXTREME COLD MITIGATION

Severe winter weather causes deterioration and damage to homes every year. There are many things you can do to prepare for the bitter cold, ice and snow in advance to save you money and headaches in the long run. Some of these tips should be used by apartment dwellers too.

“Winterize” your home

- Insulate walls and attic.
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic film from the inside to keep warmth in.
- Detach garden hoses and shut-off water supply to faucets.
- Install faucet covers or wrap with towels and duct tape.
- Show family members the location of your main water valve and mark it so you can find it quickly.
- Drain sprinkler lines or well lines before the first freeze.
- Keep inside temperature of your home at 68 degrees Fahrenheit (20 degrees Celsius) or higher.
- Wrap pipes near exterior walls with towels or heating tape.
- Change furnace filters regularly and have it serviced.
- Make sure you have good lighting from street and drive-ways to help others see snow and ice patches and try to keep paths clear of drifts.
- Remove dead tree branches since they break easily.
- Cover fireplace openings with fire-resistant screens.
- Check shingles to make sure they are in good shape.

Preventing “ice dams”

A lot of water leakage and damage around outside walls and ceilings are

actually due to “ice dams”. Ice dams are lumps of ice that form on gutters or downspouts and prevent melting snow from running down. An attic with no insulation (like a detached garage) or a well-sealed and insulated attic will generally not have ice dams. But if the roof has peaks and valleys, is poorly insulated, or has a large roof overhang, ice dams usually happen.

Some tips to prevent ice dams:

- Keep gutters and downspouts clear of leaves and debris.
- Find areas of heat loss in attic and insulate it properly.
- Wrap or insulate heating duct work to reduce heat loss.
- Remove snow buildup on roof and gutters using snow rake or soft broom.
- Consider installing roof heat tapes (electric cables) that clip onto shingles’ edges to melt channels in ice. (Remember, cables use a lot of energy and may not look pretty but could help on homes with complicated roofs.)

Preventing frozen pipes

- Keep doors open under sinks so heat can circulate.
- Run a slow trickle of lukewarm water and check water flow before going to bed and when you get up. (First sign of freezing is reduced water flow so keep an eye on it.)
- Heat your basement or at least insulate it well.
- Close windows and keep drafts away from pipes since air flow can cause pipes to freeze more often.

MITIGATION TIPS SUMMARY...

Take responsibility...

Basically, no matter where you live, YOU should take personal responsibility and prepare yourself, your family and your property BEFORE disasters or natural hazards strike.

...and learn more!

After reviewing the remainder of this manual, please contact your local emergency officials or your local building department to learn about all the risks in your area and what to expect if disaster strikes.

Or visit FEMA’s “Plan Ahead” section at www.fema.gov

Remember ... it's not a matter of IF but rather WHEN a disaster of some type will affect you or a loved one. The best thing you can do to deal with ANY type of disaster is...

BE AWARE... BE PREPARED... and... HAVE A PLAN!

If you do these 3 things, the life and property you save could be your own... because what you don't know CAN hurt you!

Now we are going to briefly summarize some key players involved in the response process.

Then we'll cover what to do **BEFORE**, **DURING** and **AFTER** specific types of natural and man-made disasters (sorted alphabetically).

We then cover some tips on **RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER** (includes many "AFTER" tips that apply to most every type of disaster) and on **SHELTER LIVING**.

We also offer some tips on **USING HOUSEHOLD FOODS, WATER PURIFICATION**, and **SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE** followed by tips for **HELPING OTHERS** and **DEALING WITH DEATH OR MASS CASUALTIES** at the end this Section.

Section 3 covers a variety of basic First Aid topics (sorted alphabetically) that may be necessary to use during a major disaster or just for the minor injury at home.

Section 4 contains many helpful telephone numbers and web sites of various agencies and organizations.

And finally, we ask you please take some time to review the Appendixes, resources and web sites near the back of this manual.

As mentioned in the Introduction, a majority of this data was compiled from various publications provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA, the CDC, Public Safety Canada, the Red Cross and others to assist you in preparing for various disasters.

We realize you may not experience every type of disaster or emergency in your part of the world but, if you ever travel away from home, you could potentially be placed in a disaster situation so please educate yourself and your family.

Knowledge is power and can help reduce fear and anxiety.

What are YOU gonna do about...

A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCY?

*Please note: Nukes [nuclear devices] and dirty bombs [radiological dispersion devices or RDDs] are both covered in the next topic called **TERRORISM**, but review next several pages before moving on.*

The World Nuclear Association reports as of October 2008 there are 439 commercial nuclear power reactors in 30 countries with 367 more reactors under construction or planned. The U.S. has over 100 commercial power plants and Canada has 20 power stations meaning millions of citizens live within 10 miles (16 km) of an operating reactor. And WNA reports there are 280 research reactors (54 in the U.S.) mainly on university campuses.

Even though governments and associations monitor and regulate construction and operation of plants, accidents are possible and do happen. An accident could result in dangerous levels of radiation that could affect the health and safety of the public living near a nuclear power plant, as well as people many miles away depending on winds and weather - so millions of North Americans could potentially be affected.

Some other incidents involving possible radiation exposure may be a nuclear missile or suitcase nuke (plutonium creates massive energy and destruction) or a “dirty bomb”. (Again, these are covered in **TERRORISM**.)

How is radiation detected?

You cannot see, feel, taste or smell radiation, but special instruments can detect even the smallest levels of it. If radiation is released, authorities will monitor levels of radioactivity to determine the potential danger so they can alert and protect the public. *Learn about detection devices on page 116.*

What is best way to reduce radiation exposure?

Limit the amount of radiation you are exposed to by doing 3 things ...

Distance - The more distance between you and the source of radiation, the less you'll receive. During a serious accident you may be told to evacuate.

Shielding - Heavy, dense materials between you and radiation is best - this is why you want to stay indoors since the walls in your home should be good enough to protect you in some cases... but listen to radio and TV to learn if you need to evacuate.

Time - Most radioactivity loses its strength rather quickly. Limiting your time near the source of radiation reduces the amount you receive.

What is the most dangerous part of a nuclear accident?

Radioactive iodine - nuclear reactors contain many different radioactive products, but a dangerous one is radioactive iodine which, once absorbed, can damage cells of the thyroid gland. The greatest population that suffers in a nuclear accident is **children** (including unborn babies) since their thyroid is so active, but all people are at risk of absorbing radioactive iodine.

How can I be protected from radioactive iodine?

Potassium iodide (KI) - can be purchased over-the-counter now (usually from companies selling disaster-related kits) and is known to be an effective thyroid-blocking agent. In other words, it fills up the thyroid with good iodine that keeps radioactive iodine from being absorbed into our bodies.

What if I am allergic to iodine?

According to the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, the FDA suggests that risks of allergic reaction to potassium iodide are minimal compared to subjecting yourself to cancer from radioactive iodine. Ask your doctor or pharmacist what you should keep on hand in the event of an allergic reaction.

Many European countries stockpile potassium iodide (KI), especially since the Chernobyl incident. Several states are considering or already have stockpiles of KI ready in case of an accident or incident.

As of Jan 2005, the FDA has approved 3 KI products - Iosat, ThyroSafe, and ThyroShield. Learn more at www.fda.gov/cder/drugprepare/KI_Q&A.htm or www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/ki.asp

Community Planning for Emergencies (U.S. and Canada)

Local, state and provincial governments, Federal agencies and utilities have developed emergency response plans in the event of a nuclear power plant accident.

United States' plans define 2 "emergency planning zones" (EPZs)

- **Plume Exposure EPZ** - a 10-mile radius from nuclear plant where people may be harmed by radiation exposure
NOTE: People within a 10-mile radius are given emergency information about radiation, evacuation routes, special arrangements for handicapped, etc. via brochures, phone books, and utility bills.
- **Ingestion Exposure EPZ** - about a 50-mile radius from plant where accidentally released radioactive materials could contaminate water supplies, food crops and livestock

TIPS ON CALLING 9-1-1 FOR AN AMBULANCE

Whenever there is an emergency, use the following tips to help decide if you should call 9-1-1 (or local emergency number) for an ambulance.

Call if victim...

- ... is trapped
- ... is not responding or is passed out
- ... is bleeding badly or bleeding cannot be stopped
- ... has a cut or wound so bad and deep that you can see bone or muscles
- ... has a body part missing or is torn away
- ... has pain below the rib cage that does not go away
- ... is peeing, pooping or puking blood (called passing blood)
- ... is breathing weird or having trouble breathing
- ... seems to have hurt their head, neck or back
- ... is jerking uncontrollably (called having a seizure)
- ... has broken bones and cannot be moved carefully
- ... acts like they had a heart attack (chest pain or pressure)

If you call 9-1-1 there may be a recording or delay while your call is being processed. DO NOT HANG UP -- wait for a 9-1-1 dispatcher.

When you talk to 9-1-1 or the emergency number...

- ... try to stay CALM and describe what happened and what is wrong with the victim
- ... give the location of the emergency, your name and the phone number you are calling from
- ... follow their instructions in case they tell you what to do for the victim
- ... do NOT hang up until the 9-1-1 operator tells you to.

What are YOU gonna do about...

A STROKE?

According to the American Stroke Association, about 700,000 Americans suffer strokes each year and almost 1/4 of those victims die making stroke the #3 killer in the U.S. Canada reports about 40,000-50,000 new strokes annually killing about 16,000 Canadians making it the 4th leading cause of death according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

A stroke (or “brain attack”) occurs when oxygen and vital nutrients carried by blood are cut off causing brain cells to die. It’s cut off because...

...a blood vessel is blocked in the neck or brain (by a blood clot or narrowing of an artery) -- called an **ischemic** [is-KEM-ik] stroke (*causes about 83% of strokes*)

... **or** ...

...a blood vessel bursts or leaks -- called **hemorrhagic** [hem-o-RAJ-ik] stroke or bleeder (*causes 17% of strokes*)

NOTE: You only have 2 - 6 hours maximum to stop permanent brain damage from a stroke - so get to a hospital as quickly as possible (within 3 hours is best!)

Things to watch for...

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding

Loss of muscle control on one side of the body

Loss of balance, stumbling, dizziness or fainting

Different sized pupils (one pupil small / one enlarged)

Severe headache

Blurred or double-vision in one or both eyes

Shock (pale, cold or clammy, weak or rapid pulse, etc.)

Transient ischemic attack (TIA / mini-stroke) - a minor or warning stroke - risk of major stroke is high

What to do...

- Call 9-1-1 for an ambulance.
- Get victim to lie back with head raised (put pillows or blankets under head and shoulders so partially sitting up).
- Loosen any tight or restrictive clothing.
- See if there are any other injuries.
- If victim is drooling or having problems swallowing, place them on their side to keep the airway open.
- Stay with victim until medical help arrives.

APPENDIX B

Business Continuity (Plan for the Unexpected)

WHAT IS BUSINESS CONTINUITY?

Basically the concept we're focusing on means how quickly your business could reopen and function following a flood, fire, terrorist attack or even pandemic flu. By planning in advance with managers and employees, the odds of a company surviving and recovering from a disaster increase dramatically.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's *Ready Business* site, America's businesses form the backbone of the nation's economy; small businesses alone account for over 99% of all companies with employees, employ 50% of all private sector workers and provide nearly 45% of the nation's payroll. However, up to 25% of small businesses (or 1 out of 4) do not reopen after a major disaster.

A commitment to planning today will help support employees, customers, the community, the local economy and even the country.

TIPS ON DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

No matter what size your business is you should plan in advance to manage any type of emergency. Obviously, a large company's plan will be much more complex than a small home office or a Mom & Pop shop, but the following tips may help you get started.

Please note, we are only covering some key issues here extracted from DHS' *Ready Business* site then listing some resources and links at the end, but realize there are many resources available to business owners including consultants who can develop a business continuity plan for your company.

[Learn risks](#) - Ask your local emergency management office what types of disasters are common in the places where you have offices or buildings and review those topics in this book.

[Learn "Threat Levels"](#) - Review the District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency's **Terrorist Threat Advisory System** for tips on what business owners and managers should be doing at each color code. (*see pages 79-86*)

Travel - Stay current on travel updates and restrictions by visiting www.cdc.gov/travel or www.state.gov/travelandbusiness

Make a plan - Visit www.ready.gov/business to download Sample Plans, Checklists, Forms, etc. Also ...

- Find out which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are needed to keep your business operating.
- Create a list of suppliers, shippers, and key contacts you use daily.
- Decide where you would go if your building, office or store is not useable. (Known as a continuity of operations plan or COOP.)
- Plan for payroll continuity.
- Define who will help develop your company's emergency plan.
- Make sure everyone involved knows what to do and have backup staff trained and ready to fill in, if needed.
- Share your plans with others in your building or complex and talk to local First Responders, vendors and others to exchange ideas, experience and knowledge.
- Update and review plans at least once a year if not more often.

Keep employees in mind - A good plan includes your most important asset.

- Keep lines of communication open both ways with newsletters, alert systems through email or voicemail, Q & A sessions with management and key personnel involved with planning, etc.
- Ensure you have plans for disabled employees and assign "buddies" to help during an emergency. Visit www.nod.org for tips.
- Update employee emergency contact data often and keep a current copy with other important papers off-site or in Grab & Go kits.
- Practice, practice, practice -- make sure all employees do drills and know what to do and where to go during and after a disaster.

Make or get Grab & Go kits - Review Section 1 for tips on assembling a **Disaster Supplies Kit** for your people. Share ideas with employees too since they may want to make their own small "Office Kit" with personal items. Many companies sell pre-stocked or customized Corporate Kits based on number of employees and days needed - check online vendors like www.thecuresafety.com or call your local Red Cross.

Stay or go..? - Plan in advance how staff should **shelter-in-place** versus **evacuate** the building. (*see THINK ABOUT SHELTER in Section 1 and EVACUATION topic in Section 2*)

Things to plan for if instructed to "Shelter-in-place":

- Listen to local authorities and tune in radio or TV for updates.

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Bill and Janet Liebsch are the founders of Fedhealth, a publishing and marketing company formed to help the public focus on preparedness and health-related issues. They are dedicated to developing and marketing programs that primarily benefit First Responders, schools, and volunteers. Fedhealth books and eBooks are continually updated on preparedness and safety-related topics.

DISCLAIMER

The authors of this Manual are not licensed physicians, and the enclosed suggestions should not replace the advice of trained medical staff and officials. This information is not intended as a substitute for a first aid course, but reviews basic first aid measures that could be used when professional medical assistance is delayed or temporarily unavailable due to a major disaster or crisis. All data compiled here is for informational purposes only and neither the authors nor Fedhealth can accept responsibility for any injury, loss or damage arising from the use of this information. During a time of crisis, citizens should heed the advice of local officials over the data contained in this book.