

# 10 WAYS TO BE PREPARED

## 1. Identify Your Risk

What are the hazards where you live or work? Find out what natural or human-caused disasters pose a risk for you.



- Do you live near a flood plain, an earthquake fault, or in a high fire danger area?
- Are you prepared for an unexpected human-made disaster that can strike any time?
- Does your neighborhood or community have a disaster plan?

## 2. Create a Family Disaster Plan

Your family needs a plan that tells everyone:



- Where to meet if you have to evacuate.
- Who you've identified as an out-of-state "family contact".
- How to get emergency information in your community.
- How to take care of your family pets.



### 3. Practice Your Disaster Plan

After you have sat down with your family and written your plan — practice it.



Start by having family members meet at a designated spot outside your home — like you would after a fire or after the shaking stops. Know how to respond in the event of any disaster — whether to stay put indoors, or whether to evacuate your neighborhood by car.

If your family needs to evacuate, know the proper evacuation procedures and routes as determined by your local OES office.

1

Quiz your kids every six months so they remember what to do.  
*Do they know how to call 911?*

2

Discuss as a family what types of disasters may occur and how to react.

3

Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.

4

Meeting Places

*Does everyone know where to meet?*

- Meet at a short distance from home in case of house fire.

- Meet at a designated place outside of the neighborhood in case you cannot return home.  
*(Relatives or friends house)*

5

Replace stored water every three months and stored food every six months.

6

Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.

7

Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

## 4. Build a Disaster Supply Kit for Your Home

If you are stranded in your car or have to be self-sufficient at home until help arrives, you need to have a disaster kit with you.

### FOOD

Following a disaster there may be power outages that could last for several days. Stock canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water or special preparation. Be sure to include a manual can opener and eating utensils.

Consider the following things when putting together your **emergency food supplies**:



- Store at least a several-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Choose foods your family will eat.
- Remember any special dietary needs.

### Suggested Emergency Food Supplies



Ready-to-eat canned meat, fruits, vegetables and a can opener



Peanut butter



Non-perishable pasteurized milk



Protein or fruit bars



Dried fruit



Canned juices



High-energy foods



Dry cereal or granola



Comfort/stress foods



Food for infants

## FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION

Without electricity or a cold source, food stored in refrigerators and freezers can become unsafe. Bacteria in food grow rapidly at temperatures between 40 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit and if these foods are consumed you can become very sick. Thawed food usually can be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold." It can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals. Remember "When in doubt, throw it out."



### DO

- 1 Keep food in covered containers.
- 2 Keep cooking and eating utensils clean.
- 3 Throw away any food that has come into contact with contaminated flood water.
- 4 Throw away any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- 5 Throw away any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- 6 Use ready-to-feed formula. If you must mix infant formula, use bottled water or boiled water as a last resort.

### DON'T

- 1 Eat foods from cans that are swollen, dented or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat.
- 2 Eat any food that looks or smells abnormal, even if the can looks normal.
- 3 Let garbage accumulate inside, both for fire and sanitation reasons.

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### COOKING

Alternative cooking sources can be used in times of emergency including candle warmers, chafing dishes, fondue pots or a fireplace. Charcoal grills and camp stoves are for outdoor use only. Commercially canned food may be eaten out of the can without warming.

#### *To heat food in a can*

- 1** Remove the label.
- 2** Thoroughly wash and disinfect the can. (Use a diluted solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water.)
- 3** Open the can before heating.

#### *Managing food without power*

- 1** Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
- 2** The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours if it is unopened.
- 3** Refrigerated or frozen foods should be kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below for proper food storage
- 4** Use a refrigerator thermometer to check the temperature.
- 5** Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power was out for no more than four hours.
- 6** Discard any perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs or leftovers that have been above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for two hours or more.

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### Using dry ice

- 1 Know where you can get dry ice prior to a power outage.
- 2 25 pounds of dry ice will keep a 10 cubic foot freezer below freezing for three to four days.
- 3 If you use dry ice to keep your food cold, make sure it does not come in direct contact with the food.
- 4 Use care when handling dry ice. Wear dry, heavy gloves to avoid injury.

*For more information about food safety during an emergency visit [FoodSafety.gov](http://FoodSafety.gov).*

## WATER

Following a disaster clean drinking water may not be available. Your regular water source could be cut-off or compromised through contamination. Prepare yourself by building a supply of water that will meet your family's needs during an emergency.

### Take the following into account:



Children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more water.

A medical emergency might require additional water.

If you live in a warm weather climate, more water may be necessary. In very hot temperatures, water needs can double.



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### Water Tips

1

**Never ration drinking water unless ordered to do so by authorities.**

Drink the amount you need today and try to find more for tomorrow. Minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.

2

**Drink water that you know is not contaminated first.**

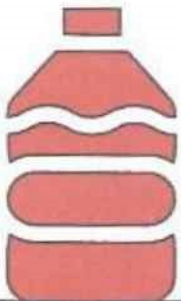
If necessary, suspicious water, such as cloudy water from regular faucets or water from streams or ponds, can be used after it has been treated. If water treatment is not possible, put off drinking suspicious water as long as possible but do not become dehydrated.

3

**Do not drink carbonated or caffeinated beverages instead of drinking water.**

Caffeinated drinks and alcohol dehydrate the body which increases the need for drinking water.

### WATER STORAGE



Buy commercially bottled water and store in the sealed original container in a cool, dark place.

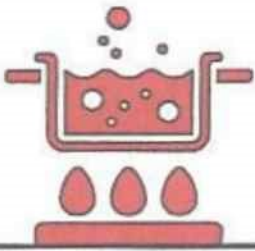
If you must prepare your own containers of water, purchase food-grade water storage containers. Before filling with chlorinated water, thoroughly clean the containers with dishwashing soap and sanitize the bottles by cleaning with a solution of one teaspoon of unscented liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water. Water that has not been commercially bottled should be replaced every six months.

### WATER TREATMENT

If you have used all of your stored water and there are no other reliable clean water sources, it may become necessary to treat suspicious water. Treat all water of uncertain quality before using it for drinking, food washing or preparation, washing dishes, brushing teeth or making ice. In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain microorganisms (germs) that cause diseases such as dysentery, cholera, typhoid and hepatitis.

There are many ways to treat water. Often, the best solution is a combination of methods. Before treating, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom or strain them through coffee filters or layers of clean cloth.

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### **Boiling.**

Boiling is the safest method of treating water. In a large pot or kettle, bring water to a rolling boil for one full minute, 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 also will improve the taste of stored water.



### **Chlorination.**

You can use household liquid bleach to kill microorganisms. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 to 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners.

Add 1/8 teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. The water should have a slight bleach odor. If it doesn't, then repeat the dosage and let it stand for another 15 minutes. If it still does not smell of chlorine, discard it and find another source of water.

Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores that do not contain 5.25 or 6.0 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient are not recommended and should not be used.



### **Distillation.**

While boiling and chlorination will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes (germs) that resist these methods, as well as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Distillation involves boiling water and then collection of only the vapor that condenses. The condensed vapor will not include salt or most other impurities.

To distill, fill a pot halfway with 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.



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<b>METHODS</b>	<b>KILLS MICROBES</b>	<b>REMOVES OTHER CONTAMINANTS</b> (heavy metals, salts, and most other chemicals)
Boiling	Yes	No
Chlorination	Yes	No
Distillation	Yes	Yes

### EMERGENCY SUPPLY LIST

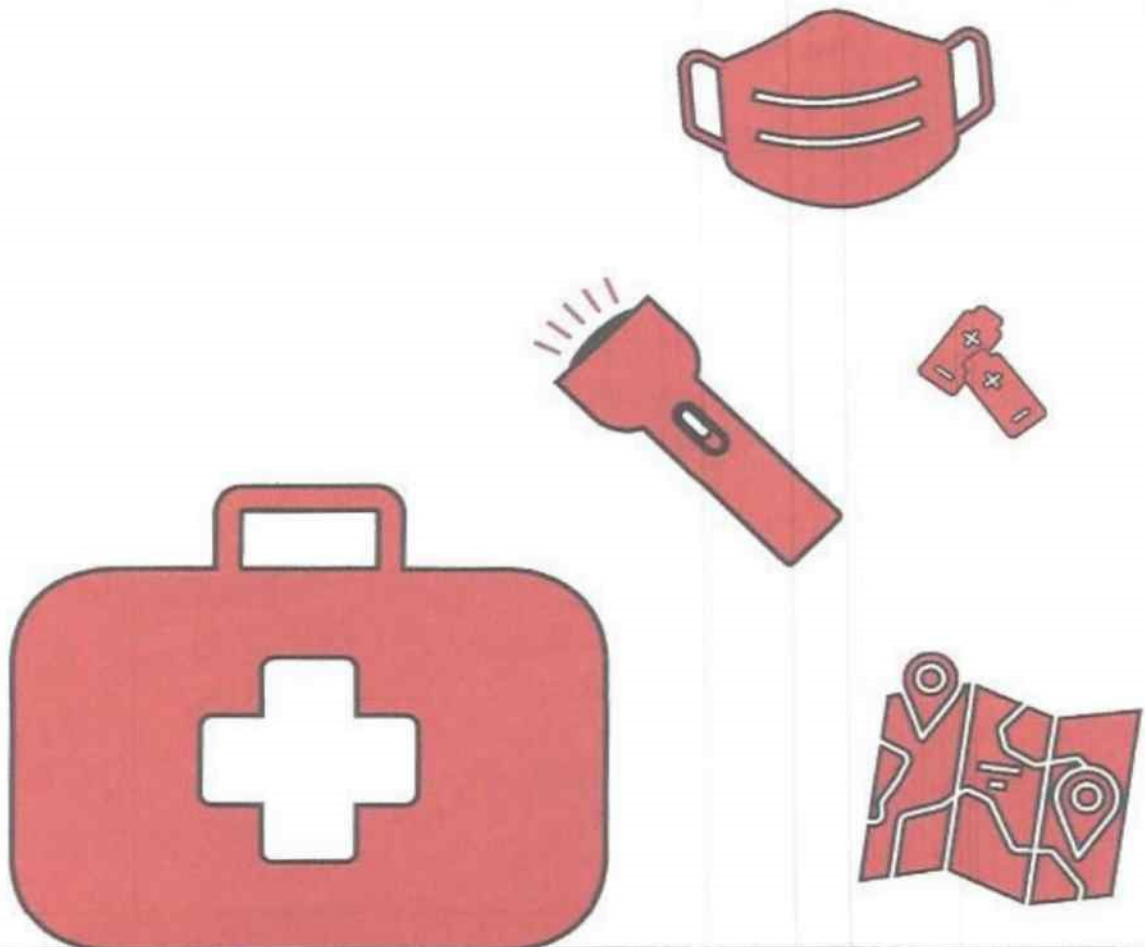
#### Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food, water, and supplies for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a portable waterproof container
- Cash and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies, personal hygiene items and hand sanitizer
- Mess kits, Paper cups, plates and disposable utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

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## Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

- Water and non-perishable food for several days
- Extra cell phone battery or charger
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio that can receive NOAA Weather Radio tone alerts and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle, to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Non-sparking wrench or pliers to turn off utilities Can opener (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps



## 5. Prepare Your Children

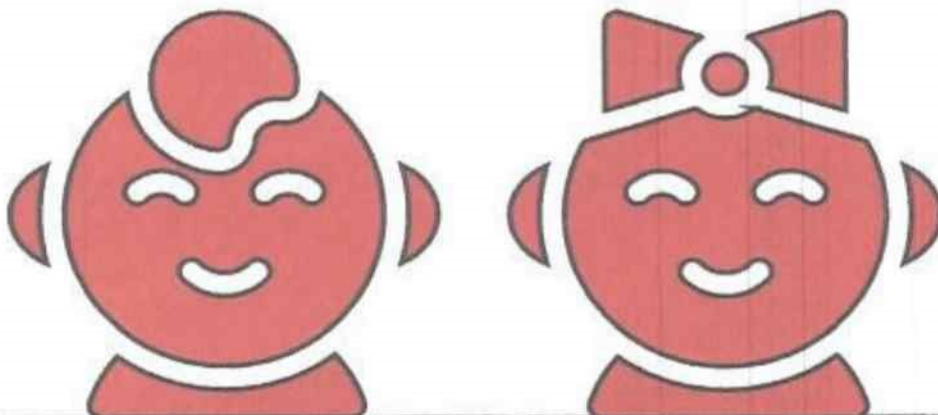
Talk to your kids about what the risks are and what your family will do if disaster strikes. Children need to be prepared for a disaster as much as adults, if not more.

Below are suggested tips to prepare your children for emergencies.

### Infants and Toddlers

For infants and toddlers, special emphasis should be placed on making their environment as safe as possible.

- 1 Cribs should be placed away from windows, and tall, unsecured bookcases and shelves that could slide or topple.
- 2 A minimum of a 72-hour supply of extra water, formula, bottles, food, juices, clothing, disposable diapers, baby wipes and prescribed medications should be stored where it is most likely to be accessible after an emergency.
- 3 Also keep an extra diaper bag with these items in your car.
- 4 Store strollers, wagons, blankets and cribs with appropriate wheels to evacuate infants, if necessary.
- 5 Install bumper pads in cribs or bassinets to protect babies during the shaking of an earthquake or explosion.
- 6 Install latches on all cupboards (not just those young children can reach) so that nothing can fall on your baby during an earthquake or explosion.



## Preschool and School-age Children

By age three or so, children can begin to understand what earthquakes are, as well as fires and floods, and how to get ready for them. Take the time to explain what causes these types of emergencies in terms they'll understand. Include your children in family discussions and planning for emergency safety.

Conduct drills and review safety procedures every six months.

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|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Show children the safest places to be in each room when an earthquake hits or explosion occurs. Also show them all possible exits from each room.                                      |
| <b>2</b> | Use sturdy tables to teach children to Duck, Cover & Hold during an earthquake or explosion.   |
| <b>3</b> | Make sure that children are ready to protect themselves with Stop, Drop and Roll during a fire. Also make sure that you practice emergency exit drills in the house (EDITH) regularly. |
| <b>4</b> | Teach children what to do wherever they are during an emergency (at school, in a tall building, outdoors).   |
| <b>5</b> | Make sure children's emergency cards at school are up-to-date.   |
| <b>6</b> | Although children should not turn off any utility valves, it's important that they know what gas smells like. Advise children to tell an adult if they smell gas after an emergency.   |

## 6. Don't Forget Those with Special Needs

Disability intersects every demographic group—there are people with disabilities of all ages, races, genders or national origin. And, disabilities can impact a person in a variety of ways—both visible and invisible. For people with disabilities and their families, it is important to consider individual circumstances and needs to effectively prepare for emergencies and disasters.

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|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Infants, seniors and those with special needs must not be forgotten.   |
| <b>2</b> | Make sure that supplies for your infant are in your kit and that you have items such as medications, oxygen tanks, or other medical supplies that seniors or those with special needs may require. |
| <b>3</b> | Check out Cal OES' tips for preparing the elderly.   |

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## GET INFORMED!

Know what disasters could affect your area, which ones could call for an evacuation and when to shelter in place.

## EVACUATION

### Plan to Evacuate

Many kinds of emergencies can cause you to have to evacuate. In some cases, you may have a day or two to prepare while other situations might call for an immediate evacuation. Planning is vital to making sure that you can evacuate quickly and safely no matter what the circumstances.

### Before an evacuation

- 1** Learn the types of disasters that are likely in your community and the local emergency, evacuation and shelter plans for each specific disaster.
- 2** Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.
- 3** Check with local officials about what shelter spaces are available for this year. Coronavirus may have altered your community's plans.
- 4** If you evacuate to a community shelter, follow the latest guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for protecting yourself and your family from possible coronavirus: people over 2 years old should use a cloth facial covering while at these facilities.
  - Be prepared to take cleaning items with you like masks, soap, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes or general household cleaning supplies to disinfect surfaces.
  - Maintain at least 6 feet of space between you and people who aren't in your immediate family.
- 5** Identify several places you could go in an emergency such as a friend's home in another town or a motel. Choose destinations in different directions so that you have options during an emergency.
- 6** If needed, identify a place to stay that will accept pets. Most public shelters allow only service animals.
- 7** Be familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.

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<b>8</b>	Always follow the instructions of local officials and remember that your evacuation route may be on foot depending on the type of disaster.
<b>9</b>	Come up with a family/household plan to stay in touch in case you become separated; have a meeting place and update it depending on the circumstance.
<b>10</b>	Assemble supplies that are ready for evacuation. Prepare a “go-bag” you can carry when you evacuate on foot or public transportation and supplies for traveling longer distances if you have a car.
<b>11</b>	<p>If you have a car:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep a full tank of gas if an evacuation seems likely. Keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case of an unexpected need to evacuate. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages. Plan to take one car per family to reduce congestion and delay.</li> <li>- Make sure you have a portable emergency kit in the car.</li> </ul>
<b>12</b>	If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if needed. Decide with family, friends or your local emergency management office to see what resources may be available.

### CAR SAFETY

Plan long trips carefully and listen to the radio or television for up-to-date weather forecasts and road conditions. In bad weather, drive only if absolutely necessary.

#### Emergency Kit for the Car

In case you are stranded, keep an emergency supply kit in your car with these automobile extras:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangles
- Ice scraper
- Blanket
- Map
- Car litter or sand (for better tire traction)

#### Prepare Your Car for Emergencies

Have a mechanic check the following on your car before an emergency:

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Antifreeze levels                 | • Oil   |
| • Battery and ignition system       | • Thermostat  |
| • Brakes                            | • Windshield wiper equipment and washer fluid level |
| • Exhaust system                    |   |
| • Fuel and air filters              |   |
| • Heater and defroster              |   |
| • Lights and flashing hazard lights |   |

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### Car Safety Tips

- 1** Keep your gas tank full in case of evacuation or power outages. A full tank will also keep the fuel line from freezing.
- 2** Install good winter tires and make sure they have enough tread, or any chains or studs required in your local area.
- 3** Do not drive through flooded areas. 6 inches of water can cause a vehicle to lose control or possibly stall. A foot of water will float many cars.
- 4** Be aware of areas where flood waters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- 5** If a power line falls on your car, you are at risk of electrical shock. Stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- 6** If it becomes hard to control the car, pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake.
- 7** If the emergency could affect the stability of the roadway avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards.



*Keep a NOAA Weather Radio tuned to your local emergency station and monitor TV and radio. Follow mobile alerts and warnings about severe weather in your area.*

*Download the FEMA app and get weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States.*