

City of Los Angeles Disaster Preparedness Guide



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About this Guide

This Disaster Preparedness Guide has been provided by the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department (EMD) as part of the city's Ready Your LA Neighborhood (RYLAN) program. This quick reference guide provides the information needed to help you and your family learn the importance of being prepared and how to prepare for disasters before they happen. Los Angeles is at risk from natural, man-made, and accidental incidents of high consequence. Understanding and preparing for the threats facing our city is a shared responsibility. Take some time to read it and share what you learn with your family and friends. This is a free publication, available online and in hardcopy (limited quantities).

About the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department

The Emergency Management Department (EMD), established by City Ordinance in 2000, leads the City of Los Angeles in comprehensive emergency management, including planning for, response to, recovery from, natural, man-made, and accidental incidents of high consequence. The EMD is one of the City's public safety agencies whose job is to plan for how the local government and its communities and businesses will respond to and recover from disasters. This is accomplished by writing emergency plans, training and exercising them with departments who will be involved in helping the city get back to normal following a localized or citywide disaster. Additionally, we focus on creating a culture where neighbors, businesses, and communities work together to prepare in advance of a disaster and learn the best steps to take in the immediate aftermath, so that everyone in our city can recover quickly and emerge stronger as a more prepared community.

EMD also works with numerous municipalities, state and federal agencies, and the private sector to preserve life, stabilize and resolve incidents, limit loss, conserve property, and ensure continuity of operations and government. The department is involved with a number of outreach, educational, and community preparedness activities, such as RYLAN, that make readiness for all Angelenos a priority.





Introduction

Are you prepared for a major earthquake, fire, flood or other disaster? This guide is designed to help you and your family get ready.

This guide is provided as part of the RYLAN—Ready Your Los Angeles Neighborhood—Program, a free service offered by the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department to empower neighborhoods to be more prepared for the next big disaster.

Disasters often happen without warning, which is why it is so important to plan ahead. Planning can help save lives, reduce injuries and minimize damage.

With preparation comes peace of mind.

You will feel better knowing that in the event of a disaster you will be able to answer these questions:

- Am I familiar with the types of disasters that can occur in my area?
- Do I know what to do during and after a disaster?
- How will I contact my loved ones if we are separated during a disaster?
- Do I have the right support network and emergency supplies to help me get by for up to three days?

Preparing does not need to take a lot of time or money.

This guide will walk you through the four steps of disaster preparation:

- MAKE YOUR PLAN
- BUILD A KIT
- STAY INFORMED
- GET INVOLVED

This guide will also explain how to plan for specific disaster situations and provide some helpful safety tips. In the back of the guide are easy-to-use checklists to help your preparation planning.

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Make Your Plan and Practice

Every household needs to have a disaster preparedness plan. Why? Living in Los Angeles, we are vulnerable to a wide variety of disasters that can happen without warning. Taking action today can help save lives, reduce injuries, and minimize damage. Planning ahead will also help you be more mentally prepared to manage difficult events.

Also, there is the potential that you may be separated from members of your household when disaster strikes. They might be at work, school or the grocery store. By getting prepared, you can help not just yourself, but also your family, friends, neighbors and community.

Learning about Hazards

Living in Los Angeles means we are vulnerable to a wide variety of disasters. Most people know about earthquakes but there are many other emergencies that can occur in the Los Angeles area such as wildfires, adverse weather, flooding, earthquakes, tsunamis, hazardous materials incidents, train wrecks, aircraft accidents, civil unrests, and others. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services has a great tool to help you understand the threats in your area. <http://myhazards.caloes.ca.gov/>

How to Start Your Plan

Once you understand the disasters that could happen in your area, the next step is to start preparing. Gather with the members of your household and talk through various scenarios.

Here are some key points to review:

1. Determine the safest escape routes from your home, workplace and school including two ways out of each room.
2. Identify safe spots in each room where you could take cover, if needed, like under sturdy tables and desks.

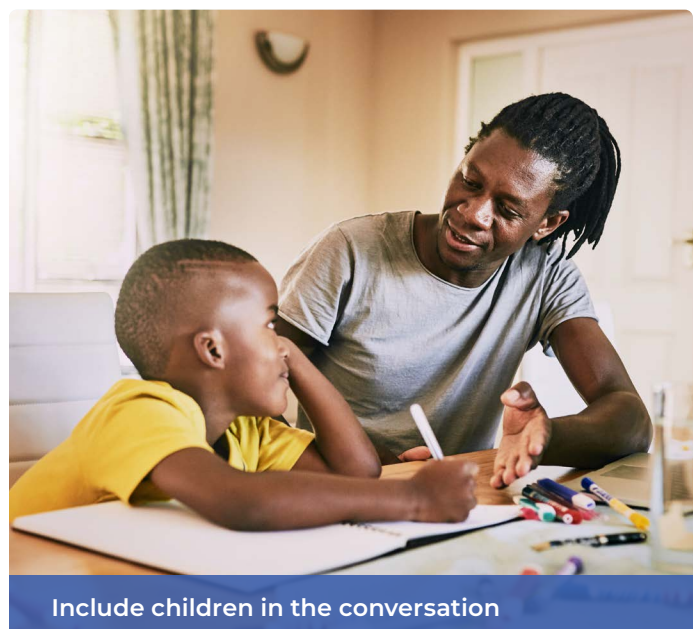
- 3.** Identify family meeting places. Pick two locations – one in your neighborhood and another outside of your neighborhood. In the event your home is unsafe, your family can meet at the neighborhood location. In the event of an evacuation, meet at the location outside your neighborhood.
- 4.** Make an emergency contact list and include everyone's phone numbers and additional contact information. Store all this information in your cell phone and make a few copies for your car, grab-and-go kit, and your house. Start a text message group with all of these numbers so you can communicate quickly. ***Use the Communication Plan at the back of the guide.***
- 5.** Document emergency information you might need including medical information and insurance for all family members. ***Use the Communication Plan at the back of the guide.***
- 6.** Choose an out-of-state contact you can call after a disaster. Sometimes when phone lines are jammed it is easier to make an out of state call. All members of your household can check in with the out-of-state contact.
- 7.** If you are unable to place a phone call, try texting. Texting is more likely to succeed and also leaves more phone lines open for 9-1-1 calls.
- 8.** Keep your important documents in a safe place and take them with you if you have to evacuate. Documents should be uploaded digitally to the cloud and hard-copies should be stored in a fire-safe place like a safe or in a sealed plastic bag in the freezer. ***Use the Important Documents Checklist at the back of the guide.***

Helping Children Prepare

If there are children in your household make sure you include them in the conversation and planning process. Have age-appropriate conversations about disasters that could affect your family and make sure kids know the family meeting locations. Plan in advance and notify your school or childcare who will pick up your children in case you are unable to get there. Also, ask your children's school or daycare about their emergency and evacuation plans.

Make sure your children know these three things!

- 1.** Their home address and family phone numbers
- 2.** How and when to call 9-1-1
- 3.** What to do if the smoke alarm or carbon monoxide alarm goes off



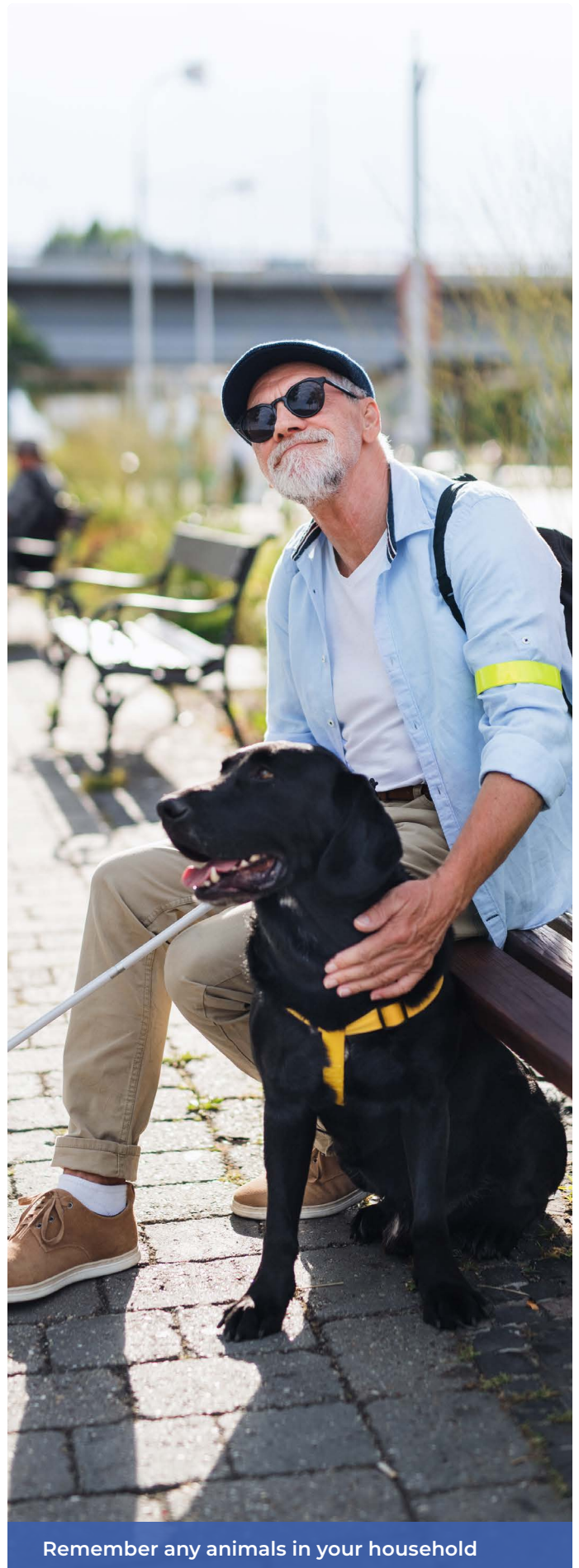
Include children in the conversation

Helping those with Access and Functional Needs Prepare

If there are members of your household who may need additional assistance, make sure you have what you need to assist them with different types of disasters. Have a conversation with each person in your household to clearly understand their needs. For those with mobility impairments, plan several accessible routes to get to your planned meeting places. If you or anyone else depends on power for medical equipment, make sure to plan for power outages and have a backup battery power source. Consider storing back-up equipment, such as a manual wheelchair, at a nearby accessible location. If anyone depends on daily medications, talk to their medical provider about obtaining an emergency supply of medicine.

Preparing for Pets and Service Animals

If you have a pet or service animal, make sure to include them in your plan. Aim to have a two week supply of food, along with a pet carrier for easy transportation and a photo of you with your pet in case you are separated and need to establish that you are the owner. ***Use the Pet Preparedness Checklist at the back of guide.***



Remember any animals in your household

Others Needing Additional Support

There may be other individuals in your household who might need additional support or assistance during a disaster.

Some of these people might be:

- Older Adults
- Non-Native English speakers
- Pregnant women or parents with babies and/or small children
- Homebound individuals
- Post-surgery patients
- People with physical or emotional disabilities
- Individuals with no access to transportation
- People with specific dietary needs

Some questions to consider as you think about supporting these members of your household:

- Have they documented their medical history and any medications they are taking?
- Is there anyone else who can help transport them if they are home alone when disaster hits?
- Can others in your Support Network help you and them?
- Can you help others in your Support Network?

Once your family has created a plan, you should practice each component of it. Also, make sure everyone knows where your emergency kits and information are stored.

3

Build A Kit

Your kit(s) will help you get through the three days after a disaster. Store the kit someplace you will be able to get to in an emergency, even if your home is damaged.

The main items to have in your disaster kit are water, food, medical supplies and equipment. *Use the Disaster Supply Checklist at the back of the guide.*

Water

Ideally, store one gallon of water per person or pet, per day for three days (that's three gallons per person/pet). If this is not realistic, store as much as you can. Use bottled water or put tap water in clean plastic containers and try to store the water in a cool, dark place. It is recommended that you rotate your stock of water every 6 months.

Food

When thinking about what food to put in your kit, foods that require no refrigeration and little preparation are best. Make sure to select foods that meet your family's dietary needs and tastes and try to get nutritious food that your family will enjoy. Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables are good, and so are high-energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers and granola bars. Once you have your disaster supplies ready, keep food in a dry and cool environment. It is recommended that you check the expiration dates every 6 months and replace items as necessary. *Use the Disaster Supply Checklist at the back of the guide.*

1 GALLON
OF WATER



CANNED
FOODS



Supplies/Equipment

Think about your day-to-day essential items, as well as which items you might need to help you recover from the disaster. For example, you should have a first aid kit to deal with minor injuries and a portable radio to learn more about post-disaster conditions. You will also need the items you use in daily life, such as medications and feminine hygiene products. ***Use the Disaster Supply Check List at the back of the guide for additional items.***

You should also have emergency kits in your workplace and car.

Grab-and-Go Kit

Have a bag ready with your essential items in case you have to evacuate quickly for sudden emergencies.



Create kits for your home, workplace, and car Place smaller kits in specific locations in your home

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What To Do During a Disaster

Living in Los Angeles means that we are vulnerable to many different types of disasters. Each of these require specific preparations and responses from you and your family to minimize damage and save lives. The following pages explain specific actions that you can do to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Earthquake

In Los Angeles we know the “Big One” is coming. It is important to know what to do during an earthquake and how to keep your loved ones safe.

If you are Outdoors:

- Move to a clear area away from buildings, power lines, signs, trees and vehicles.

If you are at the beach:

- Move to higher ground immediately and follow tsunami evacuation signs.

If you are driving:

- Pull over to a clear location and stop.
- Avoid bridges, overpasses, and power lines.
- Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

If you are in bed:

- Turn face down and cover your head and neck with a pillow.

If you are in a wheelchair:

- Lock your wheels, bend over and cover your head.

If you are Indoors: DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON.

- Drop down to the floor and take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or other furniture.
- If there is no table or desk nearby, sit on the floor against an inside wall, away from windows and tall furniture.
- Protect your head and neck with your arms.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops.

A big earthquake can have foreshocks and aftershocks (small and medium earthquakes that can occur before or after it). After the ground stops shaking, do not go outside. Stay away from old buildings, any building that seems damaged, or anything else that could fall on you in an aftershock.



Drop, cover, and hold on if indoors during an earthquake

Before the Earthquake

- 1 SECURE YOUR PLACE** by identifying hazards and securing movable items.
- 2 PLAN TO BE SAFE** by creating a disaster plan and deciding how you will communicate in an emergency.
- 3 ORGANIZE DISASTER SUPPLIES** in convenient locations.
- 4 MINIMIZE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP** by organizing important documents, strengthening your property, and considering insurance.



During the Earthquake

- 1 DROP COVER AND HOLD ON** when the earth shakes. See illustrations below.
- 2 IMPROVE SAFETY** After earthquakes by evacuating if necessary, helping the injured, and preventing further injuries and damage.



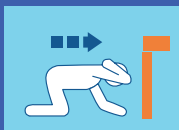
TIP: Learn the 7 steps to earthquake safety.
Go to: www.shakeout.org for more information.

Protect Yourself During Earthquakes!

If possible



DROP!



COVER!



HOLD ON!

Using wheelchair



LOCK!



COVER!



HOLD ON!

For more information: www.earthquakecountry.org

After the Earthquake

- 1** **CHECK AREAS:** If it is safe, check for gas and water leaks, and broken electrical wiring or sewage lines. If there is damage, turn the utility off at the source and immediately report gas leaks to your utility company.
- 2** **STAY CLEAR:** Stay away from downed power lines and warn others to stay away. **AVOID GAS,** do not attempt to re-light the gas pilot unless your gas line has been thoroughly inspected. Call the Gas Company for assistance.
- 3** **PUBLIC SAFETY:** Cooperate fully with public safety officials and follow instructions; they are trained to ensure safety. **AVOID DRIVING,** do not use your vehicle unless there is an emergency.
- 4** **AFTER SHOCKS:** Be prepared for aftershocks. Stay calm and help others. **NOTIFY CONTACTS** if you evacuate, leave a message at your home telling family members and others where you can be found.

Building Safety After the Earthquake

After a major earthquake, Building and Safety (LADBS) will evaluate damaged buildings (dwelling, apartment, or commercial building) to determine if buildings are safe to occupy. LADBS will then post one of the following placards on the damaged building(s).

BUILDING ASSESSMENT SIGNS

UNSAFE

Do not enter or occupy

RESTRICTED USE

Entry or occupancy is restricted as specified

INSPECTED

No apparent structural hazard, may have minor damage

More info at www.ladbs.org

Fire

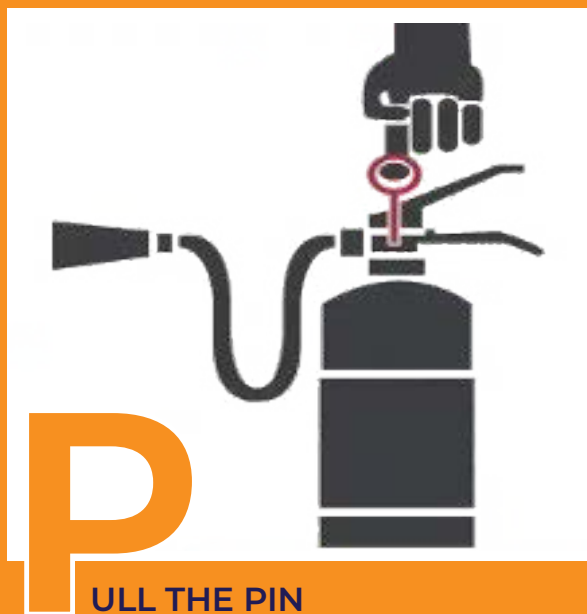
There are two kinds of fires—structure fires and wildfires—and Los Angeles is vulnerable to both.

Here is how you can prevent a house fire:

- Make sure your home has a working smoke detector in every sleeping room. If your house has multiple levels, make sure there is a detector on every level. Change smoke alarm batteries every six months.
- Make sure you have at least one fire extinguisher (If you live in an apartment this may not be allowed so check with your property manager.)
- Practice your fire escape routes with everyone in your family, including children. Plan two ways out of every room and make sure everyone knows how to unlock locks and open all doors and windows.
- If you have to plan an escape from a second story window, make sure you have a safe way to reach the ground. Think about how small children, older adults and anyone with a disability could escape through this route.

Only use a fire extinguisher to fight SMALL fires. It's best to practice using one before a real fire ignites so that you are familiar with how it works. Remember the acronym PASS: **P**ull, **A**im, **S**queeze, **S**weep

The many hillside communities within Los Angeles are under continuous threat of devastating wildfire. As this risk increases, it is important to protect yourself and your family by planning, preparing, and staying aware.



During a wildfire

- Prepare and be ready to leave BEFORE authorities issue an evacuation notice.
- Listen to local radio and television stations for updated information.
- Listen and watch for reports about poor air quality due to smoke.
- Close windows and doors to keep indoor air clean.
- Avoid polluting indoor air. Do not burn candles, fireplaces or gas stoves. Avoid vacuuming if ash has entered your home.

After a wildfire

- Inform your family and friends that you are safe.
- Do not enter your home until officials say it's safe. You may have to stay away from your home for several days.
- Avoid damaged or fallen power lines, poles, and wires.
- Once you return, avoid contact with ash and other debris without proper personal protective equipment. It could be harmful to your health.

Visit the Los Angeles Fire Department website, www.lafd.org/ready-set-go, to learn more.



QUEEZE THE LEVER



SWEEP SIDE TO SIDE

Mental Health and Stress after an Emergency

1 What are some common reactions people have after an emergency?

When an emergency strikes, it is common for people to worry about their safety and the safety of their homes/property, pets and those close to them. Our reactions to an emergency can affect the way we feel, think, and act, for example:

THINK	FEEL		ACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confused• Nightmares• Disoriented• High or low level of alertness• Can't concentrate• Can't follow simple instructions• Memory problems• Poor problem solving• Can't identify familiar objects or people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chest pain, difficult breathing, or fast heart rate (check with your doctor)• Fatigue• Nausea/vomiting• Dizziness• Sweating• Headaches• Vision problems• Aches and pains• Chills• Clammy skin• Anxiety• Trouble hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guilt• Grief• Denial• Severe panic (rare)• Fear• Worry• Irritability• Depression• Sense of failure• Feeling overwhelmed• Blaming others or self• Hopelessness• Frustration• Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anger• Withdrawal• Can't rest• Impulsive/risk-taking• Argumentative or violent• Distracted• Higher use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs

2 What can you do for yourself?

- Understand that it's normal to feel worry and stress after an emergency.
- Recognize that you did not have control over this situation. Remind yourself of the ways that you are gaining control of your situation and helping lower your anxiety. For example, "I am taking medicine and learning more about what to do."
- Turn to family, friends, and spiritual support, and talk about your experiences and feelings with them.
- Get back to the routines of your life as soon as you can.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov

3 What can you do for your child?

TIP	EXAMPLES
Help your children feel safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check in with them.• Let them talk about their fears and worries.• Stick to family routines that help them feel comfortable and secure.• Reassure them that parents, teachers, doctors, and government officials are doing their best to keep them safe and healthy.
Limit the time kids spend watching the news	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kids may be frightened, overwhelmed, or traumatized by news reports.• Supervise what they watch on TV. Have a family discussion during and after viewing to let them express their fears and concerns.
Arm yourself with the facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your kids will be less fearful if they see that you are not afraid and if you spend time with them answering all their questions

If you or members of your family have trouble coping, ask for help. At work, you may be able to get help from your human resources department or your company's Employee Assistance Program. Call a counselor or mental health professional at the **Department of Mental Health 1-800-854-7771**. You can also contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) **Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746**



5 | Checklists

Communication Plan

Record important contact information for members of your household and your out-of-state contacts:

Name	Phone	Email

Out-of-Area Emergency Contact Information

Primary Contact	Secondary Contact
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Business phone:	Business phone:
Home phone:	Home phone:
Cell phone:	Cell phone:
Email address:	Email address:
Social media:	Social media:

Emergency Contact Information

Contacts	Name	Phone Number	Address	Email
Local personal emergency contact				
Nearest hospital				
Work				
School/childcare				
Home				
Family physicians(s)				
Insurance policy holder				
Employer contact and emergency information				
School contact and emergency information				
Religious/spiritual organization				
Gas utility				
Water utility				
Electric utility				

Important Documents Checklist

Keep a copy of all your important documents in a safe place and take them with you during an evacuation.

-  **Birth/death certificates, marriage certificates, passports, and immigration documents** 
-  **Recent family photos** 
-  **Insurance policies**
-  **Property records, such as proof of address, deed or lease documents** 
-  **Medical information** *like medical records, prescription information, doctors contacts, and health insurance*
-  **Financial records** *like recent tax return, paycheck stubs*
-  **Make copies of these documents and store them in a fire and water-proof safe**

Store documents electronically by taking photos of them and storing them on a thumb drive or in the cloud—or just email them to yourself and a trusted friend living outside the region.


Disaster Supply Kit

-  **First aid kit** *know how to use the items inside* 
-  **Cash** *small denominations in both bills and coins*
-  **Medications and other health information** *know doses and have an emergency prescription handy*
Expiration date: _____ 
-  **Any medical equipment your family may need** 
-  **Extra clothing** *including for inclement weather* 
-  **Sturdy shoes** *comfortable and durable*
-  **Flashlight** *with extra batteries* 
-  **Radio** *battery powered with extra batteries or solar-powered*
-  **Tools** *wrench or hammer for turning off utilities* 
-  **Water** *1 gallon per person per day, include children and pets* 
-  **Non-perishable or canned foods** 
-  **Manual can-opener** 
-  **Toiletries** *feminine products, deodorant, toothbrush/toothpaste, soap* 
-  **Personal health protective equipment** *such as masks, gloves and sanitizing wipes* 
-  **Personal comfort items** *such as games and books* 
-  **Electronic chargers** 

Note: Water is for drinking, cleaning, and sanitation.

Grab-and-Go Kit

Have a bag ready with your essential items in case you have to evacuate quickly for sudden emergencies.

 **Important family documents**
i.e. birth and marriage certificates, driver's license, social security cards, emergency contact list, and medical information



 **Personal travel-size toiletries**

 **Extra pair of eyeglasses or contacts**



 **Whistle to signal for help**

 **Masks/face coverings**



 **Hand sanitizer/soap**



 **Water or water purification method**



 **High-protein, high-calorie energy food**

 **Change of clothes**



 **Sanitation and hygiene supplies**

 **Blanket**



 **Small entertainment games and books**

 **Family photographs of each family member and pets**



 **Pocket knife**

 **Maps**



Pet Preparedness

Try to have a 3 day supply of food and water supply. Keep items in an accessible place and store them in sturdy containers that can be carried easily.

 **Blankets/towels**



 **Leash, harness**


 **Litter pan, plastic bags, and scooper**



 **Pet carrier for easy transportation**



 **ID tags and microchip numbers**

 **A photo of you with your pet to establish you are the owner in the event you are separated**



 **Familiar items toys, bedding, treats**



 **Medical records**

 **Copies of pet registration and/or adoption paperwork**



Remember pet supplies, photos, and records



READY YOUR LA
NEIGHBORHOOD

Contact EMD with questions

ReadyLA org



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@ReadyLA

