

Family Emergency Preparedness Handbook



Family Name

Date Prepared

Next Review Date



Family Emergency Preparedness Handbook

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This handbook was adapted to the needs of Lexington County citizens by the Quality of Life Committee of the Lexington County Homeland Security Council. Appreciation is expressed to the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, for granting permission to use a model handbook they jointly developed with the Office of Emergency Preparedness at Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound and the Seattle-King County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

DISCLAIMER

Decisions about what to do in a community and / or family emergency are yours alone; the County of Lexington is not responsible for any damage or injury resulting from information included or omitted from this family emergency preparedness plan handbook.

Why Plan?

Communities in Lexington County are subject to a number of potential disasters such as fires, flooding, severe storms, earthquakes, dam failures, tornados and hurricanes. While we all hope that such occurrences never happen, it has been shown time and again that being prepared for disasters is prudent. During and right after a disaster, emergency services and government agencies may not be able to respond immediately to your needs. Their buildings, equipment, personnel, communications, and mobility may be severely hampered by the event. They will be overwhelmed. Experts tell us to plan to be on our own for a minimum of three days.

We cannot stop these disasters from occurring, but we can limit their impact on us and those we love. Contrary to what you may think, the chances of being killed or injured in a disaster are very low. More likely you will be unable to live normally in your home. It may be damaged and let in the weather, it may be cold with no heat, you may have no power or water, or it may not even be safe for you to go back into. In short, disasters make life very uncomfortable. Proper planning and preparation will help you and your family be more comfortable in the event that your home is damaged, or you can't get back into it. Think of it as a "quality of life" issue.

The most important concept in developing a family emergency preparedness plan is communication. Every member of the family needs to be involved so that when disaster strikes, everyone will know what to do. How well you manage the aftermath of disaster depends a great deal on your level of preparedness when disaster strikes.

In the following pages you will find a step-by-step guide to family emergency preparedness planning. Be sure to involve all the members of your household when developing your plan. A plan will only work when everyone knows about it and agrees to operate within its guidelines.

Once your family is prepared, it is time to look to your neighbors. In times of disaster your neighbors will probably be the first ones available to come to your aid. Find out before disaster strikes what resources you share and how you can work together for the good of one another. Good luck! And don't forget to review your plan annually.

Prepare... *Because you care*

Four Steps to Disaster Planning

1 Find Out What Disasters Could Happen To You

- Know what types of disasters are most likely to happen in your area.
 - Hurricanes: August – November
 - Tornados: March – May or in association with a hurricane
 - Snow and / or Cold: January – February
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them. Also, learn which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.
 - Emergency Alert System: A tone comes over your radio or TV followed by an emergency alert or instructions; keep a radio or TV on in the background at all times to receive Alert tones and messages.
 - Sirens (currently restricted to two areas):
 - Affecting the Chapin area, the V. C. Summer Nuclear Plant (Jenkinsville, SC) Emergency Preparedness Zone (EPZ, area within a 10 mile radius of the plant). The station runs normal siren tests on the first Tuesday of each month. There are 106 sirens within 10 miles of the plant. In emergencies, the sirens sound for three minutes, followed by alerts for residents to tune into an Emergency Alert System radio or television station for more instructions.
 - Affecting the area downstream of the Lake Murray Dam, sirens indicate the release of unusual amounts of water or a dam emergency.
- Ask about animal care after a disaster. (See page 34 for a list of web sites devoted to traveling with pets.)
- Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if needed.
- Find out about the disaster plan at your workplace, your children's school or childcare center and other places your family frequents.

2 Create A Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.

- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan to take care of your pets. (See page 34 for a list of web sites that have lists of accommodations which accept pets.)

- Consider establishing one or more “safe rooms” in your home to give you the most protection against injury during certain emergencies. (www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom)

- Ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your “family contact.” It’s often easier to call long distance following a disaster.

- Pick two places to meet:

1. Right outside your home in case of fire.
2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can’t return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.

Address _____

Phone Number _____

3 Put Your Plan Into Action

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local emergency medical services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC type fire extinguisher in your home, teach each family member to use it, and show them where it is kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a disaster supplies kit.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Take a first aid and CPR class.
- Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.
- Obtain an emergency generator to provide temporary electric power for any critical needs.

4 Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Review your plans every six months so everyone remembers what to do.
Next Review: _____
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
Date of Last Drill: _____
Date of Next Drill: _____
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
Date Inspected: _____
Next Inspection Due: _____
- Test your smoke detectors monthly. Change the batteries every six months and clean the dust from the detector each time you change batteries.
Date of Last Battery Change: _____
Next Battery Change Due: _____
- Replace stored water and food every six months.
Date of Last Rotation: _____
Date of Next Rotation: _____

HINT: When you set your clocks in the fall and the spring, also replace your stored water and food, change your smoke detector batteries, and do other things necessary to maintain your plan.

Disaster Supplies Kit

There are six basics you should stock in your home: water, food, first aid, clothing and bedding, tools, and emergency supplies and special items. Keep the items you will most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container such as a large, covered trash container, camping backpack or duffle bag. Keep a smaller version of the disaster supplies kit in the trunk of your car.



Water

- Store one gallon of water per person per day, minimum three day supply; one half to one gallon of water per pet per day
- Have purifying agents available

Food

- Store at least a three day supply of non-perishable food for each person. Select foods that require no refrigeration, cooking or preparation. Select food items that are compact and lightweight and rotate the food supply every six months.
- Ready to eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Soups - bouillon cubes or dried soups in a cup
- Milk - powdered or canned
- Stress foods - sugar cookies, hard candy
- Staples - sugar, salt, pepper
- Juices - canned, powdered or crystallized
- Smoked or dried meats such as beef jerky
- High energy foods - peanut butter, nuts, trail mix, etc

Non-Prescription Medications

- Vitamins
- Antacid
- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- Laxative
- Rubbing alcohol
- Activated charcoal
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Emetic (to induce vomiting)
- Eye wash
- Antiseptic or hydrogen peroxide

How to store water

Store your water in thoroughly washed plastic, fiberglass or enamel-lined metal containers. Never use a container that has held toxic substances. Plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles, are the best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums.

Seal water containers tightly, label them and store in a cool, dark place. Replace every six months.

First Aid Kit

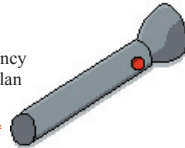
You should have two first aid kits — one for your home and the other for your car. The kit should include:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 3-inch sterile gauze pads (8-12)
- Triangular bandages (3)
- Scissors
- Needle
- Bar of soap
- Antiseptic spray
- Tongue blades and wooden applicator sticks
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Latex gloves
- Cleansing agent - soap
- 2-inch sterile gauze pads (8-12)
- Hypo-allergenic adhesive tape
- 2 & 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls each)
- Tweezers
- Safety razor blade
- Moistened towelettes (8-10 packages)
- Non-breakable thermometer
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant



Tools and Supplies

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



* Do not install batteries until needed

First Aid Kit

- Toilet paper, towelettes
- Feminine supplies
- Plastic garbage bags, ties
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Household chlorine bleach
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Personal hygiene items
- Small shovel, to dig expedient latrine
- Disinfectant

Clothing and Bedding

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

- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Thermal underwear
- Plastic Tarpaulin (to keep bedding off the floor or ground)
- Rain gear
- Hat and gloves
- Sunglasses



Special Items

Remember family members with special needs such as infants, elderly, or disabled individuals.

For Baby

- Formula
- Bottles
- Medications
- Diapers
- Powdered milk

For Adults

- Heart and high blood pressure medications
- Prescription drugs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Entertainment - games for children; books for adults.
- Insulin
- Denture needs
- Extra eye glasses

Important Family Documents - Keep these records in a waterproof portable container, such as freezer bags.

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Bank account numbers
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Photos of valuable items (for insurance purposes)
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)



Hazard Hunt

Conduct a hazard hunt to identify hazards in your home. State the action required to correct each problem. When the hazard has been corrected, put a check mark in the box.

Water heater _____
(action required)

Top heavy free standing furniture _____
(action required)

Heavy or breakable objects _____
(action required)

Electronic equipment/appliances _____
(action required)

Hanging plants _____
(action required)

Mirrors/heavy pictures _____
(action required)

Unsecured cupboard doors _____
(action required)

Poisons, toxins and solvents _____
(action required)

House foundation _____
(action required)

Chimney and roof _____
(action required)

Utilities (flexible gas connections, electrical wiring, shut off valves/switches)

(action required)

Date completed: _____

Date of next review: _____

Floor Plan

Sketch the floor plan of your home and establish two exit routes.



Floor One

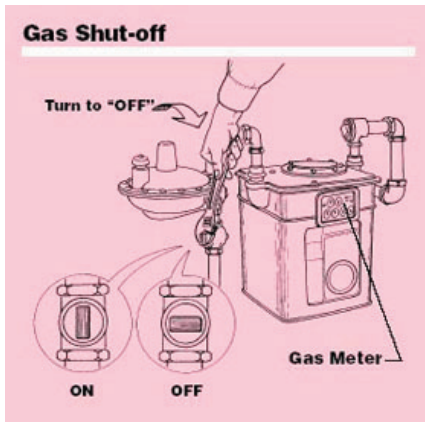


Floor Two

Utilities

Gas

- Locate your gas meter shutoff valve and learn how to turn the gas off.
- If you suspect the shutoff valve may be corroded and not working properly, call your utility company for an operational check of the valve.
- Ensure a wrench is immediately available for turning the gas meter off in an emergency.
- If you smell natural gas, get everyone out and away from the home immediately. Do not use matches, lighter, open flame appliances or operate electrical switches. Sparks could ignite gas causing an explosion.
- Shut off the gas **ONLY** if you smell gas and cannot locate the leak. **Let the gas company turn the gas back on.**
- Seek the assistance of a plumber to repair gas pipe damage.



Sewer

- Your sewer system could be damaged in a disaster such as an earthquake or a flood. Make sure the system is functioning as designed before using it to prevent contamination of your home and possibly the drinking water supply.
- Have a bucket or portable toilet available for disposing of human waste. Plastic bags placed in the toilet bowl will also work.

Electricity

- Locate your main electrical switch or fuse panel and learn how to turn off the electrical power.
- Remember, electrical sparks can cause a fire or explosion.
- Improper installation or use of generators can result in serious damage or injury, including possible death or injury to utility crews trying to restore service to the area. The following are basic principles that should guide detailed plans for the use of a generator:

Installed generators: Generators that are integrated into a structure's electrical system must:

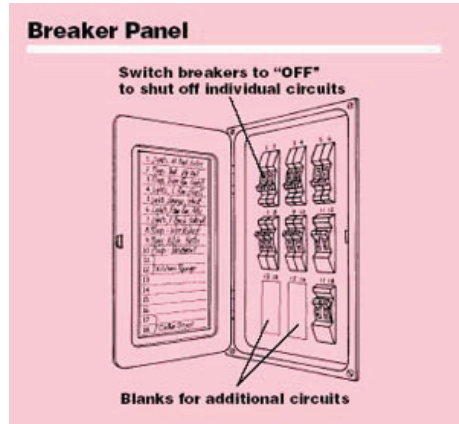
- Be installed by a licensed electrician;
- Meet the installation requirements of the National Electrical Code; and
- Be inspected and approved by a County of Lexington Building Inspection Official. Improperly installed generators are a serious potential hazard.

Portable generators: People who use portable generators should:

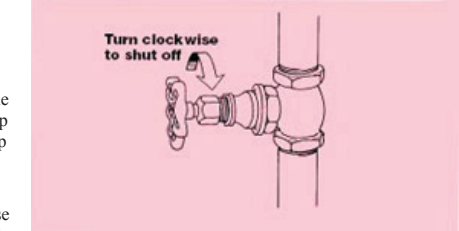
- Read the owner's manual and follow all instructions;
- Be sure the portable generator is properly grounded;
- Connect the portable generator directly to appliances to be powered using approved and properly sized power cords--not to existing house wiring.
- Operate portable generators outside, away from flammable materials, children and pets.
- Never add fuel when a generator is running; turn it off and let it cool, first.

Water

- Label the water shut off valve and learn to turn off the water supply to your home.
- Identify the valve with a large tag.
- If the shut-off valve is located outside of the home in a buried housing, keep all debris out of the housing and keep the housing covered.
- Ensure the valve can be fully turned off. If the water valve requires the use of a special tool, make sure the tool is readily available. The valve should be turned off and on several times a year to verify proper operation.



Water Shut-off



- Shut off the main valve to prevent contamination of the water supply in your water heater and plumbing.

Planning For Specific Disasters



Fire. More than 24 million fires are reported annually, resulting in over \$11 billion in property damage.

The United States has one of the highest fire death rates per capita in the world. At least 6,000 people die in fires each year, and an additional 100,000 are injured. Senior citizens and children under 5 are at highest risk. Fire is fast, dark and deadly, emitting smoke and gases that can render a person unconscious within minutes. It is the most likely disaster that families will experience.



Floods. Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters and can occur nearly anywhere in the United States. Flooding has been responsible for the deaths of more than 10,000 people since 1900. Property damage attributable to flooding now totals over \$1 billion each year. The sheer force of just six inches of swiftly moving water can knock people off their feet. Cars are easily swept away in just two feet of water. Flash floods can occur with little or no warning — and can reach full peak within minutes. Rapidly rising

walls of water can reach heights of 30 feet or more and are generally accompanied by a deadly cargo of debris.



Tornadoes and Hurricanes. A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm, tropical storm or hurricane to the ground that may contain rotating winds of up to 250 miles per hour. Thunderstorms, tropical storms and hurricanes also can produce tornadic winds involving dangerous downbursts that may come from various directions.

Tropical storms are formed from simple complexes of thunderstorms.

Hurricanes are tropical storms with winds that exceed 74 mph and circulate counter-clockwise about their centers in the Northern Hemisphere (clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere Hurricane). Tropical storms only may grow to hurricane strength with cooperation from both the ocean and the atmosphere. The water temperature (more than 81 degrees F) and moisture from the ocean are the sources of energy for hurricanes. That is why they weaken rapidly over land or colder ocean waters -- locations with insufficient heat and/or moisture.



Earthquakes. Seventy million people in 39 states are at high risk from earthquakes. People in all states, however, are at some risk. Earthquakes can cause buildings to collapse, disrupt utilities and trigger landslides, flash floods, and fires.



Winter Storms. Even Lexington County, which normally experiences mild winters, can be hit with a major snow storm or unusually cold weather. The results can be cars and trucks sliding on icy highways or heating emergencies due to power outages, lack of adequate home insulation, or difficulty in keeping adequate heat sources and supplies.



Power Outage. Everyone experiences power interruptions from time to time. Unfortunately, many of these outages come at times of weather extremes or accompany various disasters. When the power is out we lose our primary source of artificial light; many lose their source of heat and water as well. When the power is out, safety becomes a major concern.



Hazardous Materials. As many as 500,000 products pose physical or health hazards and can be defined as hazardous materials. Accidents involving toxic substances have occurred in communities across the country. For example, tank cars containing toxic substances derailed and burned in Kentucky, forcing 7,500 area residents to evacuate.



Nuclear Power. In the United States, nuclear power plants have been generating power for more than 35 years. Nuclear power plants operate in most states in the country and produce about 20 percent of the nation's power. South Carolina has several nuclear reactor sites, none of which are located in Lexington County. However, a few are close enough to have the potential for affecting county residents.

The following pages give you specific instructions on what to do for fire, flood, earthquakes, winter storms, power outages, hazardous materials and nuclear power accidents. The preparedness steps in this section are in addition to those identified in the section "Four Steps to Disaster Planning." You should first complete "Four Steps to Disaster Planning."



Fire

Getting Prepared

Working smoke detectors double your chance of surviving a fire.

- Install smoke detectors, according to the manufacturer's directions, on every level of your house: outside bedrooms on the ceiling or high on the wall, at the top of open stairways, or at the bottom of enclosed stairs and near (but not in) the kitchen.
- Clean smoke detectors once a month and change batteries at two specified times each year, when you set your clocks for Daylight Savings or Standard Time.
- Plan two escape routes out of each room. Contact your local fire authority for help in planning for the safe escape of those with disabilities.
- Make sure that windows are not nailed or painted shut and that security grating on windows have a fire safety opening feature.
- Teach everyone to stay low to the floor when escaping from a fire.
- Pick a meeting place outside your home for the family to meet after escaping from a fire. ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!
- Practice your escape plans at least twice a year.
- Clean out storage areas. Store flammable and combustible liquids in approved containers. Keep containers in the garage or an outside storage area.
- Inspect electrical appliances and extension cords for bare wires, worn plugs and loose connections annually.
- Clean and inspect primary and secondary heating equipment annually.
- Learn how to turn off the gas and electricity in an emergency.
- Install A-B-C type fire extinguishers: teach family members how to use them.
- Inspect or service your fire extinguishers annually.

In Case of Fire

Not sure you can control the fire? Evacuate and then call the fire department from a cellular phone or a neighbor's house.

- Do not attempt to extinguish a fire that is rapidly spreading.
- Use water or a fire extinguisher to put out small fires.
- **Never use water on an electrical fire.**
- Smother oil and grease fires in the kitchen with baking soda or salt, or put a lid over the flame if it is burning in a pan.
- If your clothes catch fire — Stop–Drop–Roll — until the fire is out.
- Sleep with your door closed.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, crouch down low, feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand before opening it. If the door is hot, escape through the window. If the door is not hot and this route is your only means of escape, crawl below the level of the smoke and use the first available exit door to escape. If you cannot escape, leave the door closed, stay where you are and hang a white or light-colored sheet outside the window.

After A Fire

Don't throw away damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.

- Stay out of the burned structure.
- Notify your local disaster relief service if you need housing, food, etc.
- Call your insurance agent.
- Ask the fire department for assistance in retrieving important documents.
- Keep records of all clean-up and repair costs.
- Secure personal belongings.
- If you are a tenant, notify the landlord.



Floods

Getting Prepared

Learn what to do when you hear flood warning signals.

- Find out if you live in a flood-prone area and identify dams in your area.
- Ask your local emergency manager about official flood warning signals.
- Know the terms Flood Watch, Flash Flood Watch, Flood Warning, Flash Flood Warning, and Urban and Small Stream Warning.
- Plan for evacuation.
- Consider purchasing flood insurance.
- Take steps to floodproof your home. Call your local building department or emergency management office for information.
- Keep all insurance policies and your household inventory in a safe place.
- Be aware of flash floods.
- Listen to radio or television stations for local information.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels and areas known to flood suddenly.
- If local authorities issue a flood watch, prepare to evacuate.
- Secure your home. If time permits, secure items located outside the house.
- If instructed, turn off utilities at the main switches or valves.
- Fill your car with fuel.
- Fill the bathtub with water in case water becomes contaminated or services are cut off. Sterilize the bathtub first.
- Stay away from flood waters.
- When deep flooding is likely, permit the flood waters to flow freely into your basement to avoid structural damage to the foundation and the house.

In Case of Heavy Rains

If there is any possibility of a flash flood occurring, move immediately to higher ground.

After A Flood

Flood waters may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. The water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- Stay away from flood waters.
- Stay away from moving water. Moving water six inches deep can sweep you off your feet.
- Be aware of areas where flood waters have receded and may have weakened road surfaces.
- Stay away from and report downed power lines.
- Stay away from disaster areas unless authorities ask for volunteers.
- Continue listening to the radio for information about where to get assistance.
- Consider health and safety needs. Wash your hands frequently with soap and clean water if you come in contact with flood waters.
- Throw away food that has come in contact with flood waters.
- Call your insurance agent.
- Keep records of all clean-up and repair costs.
- Take photos of or videotape your belongings and your home.
- Don't throw away damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.



Tornados and Hurricanes

Getting Prepared

Identify a safe place to take shelter.

Conduct severe storm drills with your family.

- Identify a safe place to take shelter; consider building a “safe room.” Tips on “safe room” construction can be found on the Internet at: www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom
- Conduct frequent drills each season, to include going to the designated safe place you have identified. Review your family communications plan in case a storm strikes while you are away.
- Keep a highway map nearby to follow storm movement from weather bulletins.
- Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to receive watches and warnings.
- Check for weather bulletins on the Internet: www.nws.noaa.gov or weather.gov.
- Listen to radio and television for weather information.
- Check the weather forecast before leaving for extended periods outdoors and watch for signs of approaching storms.
- If severe weather threatens, check on people who are elderly, very young, or physically or mentally disabled.
- Inventory and refresh, as necessary, your Disaster Supply Kit.
- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement, a small interior room with no windows (for example, an interior hall or bathroom), a safe room or under a sturdy piece of furniture. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Stay away from windows; if a windowless interior room is unavailable, go to the center of the room (stay away from corners because they attract debris).

When the Storm Strikes

Seek shelter.

Use your arms to protect your head and neck.

- When in a vehicle get outside and when outside with no secure structure available, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head and neck with your arms. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. In a tornado, you are safer in a low, flat location. In a hurricane, find the best built structure you can.
- Be aware of flying debris—this causes most fatalities and injuries in major storms.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes. You should leave a mobile home and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building or a storm shelter.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, or shopping malls.
- Do not open windows; use your time to seek shelter.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Keep your family together and listen to the radio or television for instructions. Use the phone – even your cell phone – only for emergency calls.

When the Storm is Over

Carefully inspect your surroundings.

Look for trapped or injured persons.

- After being assured that the storm danger has passed, exit damaged premises. If light is needed use a flashlight—not a candle, cigarette lighter, or any open flame.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and away from downed power lines and from puddles with power lines in them. Return home when authorities say it's safe.
- Help injured or trapped persons; give first aid when appropriate but don't try to move the seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help immediately.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. If you smell gas or chemical fumes, open a window and quickly leave the building. If you smell gas, turn it off at the outside main valve, if you can, and call the gas company from a phone outside the building or in another building. If you turn off the gas, a professional must turn it back on.
- If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician for advice.
- If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap. Melt ice cubes or use bottled water for safe drinking.
- Take pictures of the damage—both the house and contents—for insurance purposes.
- For answers to questions about debris removal or other solid waste issues, check the County of Lexington web site (www.lex-co.com) or call the Lexington County Solid Waste Department (803.755.3325)



Earthquakes

Getting Prepared

Look for items in your home that could become a hazard in an earthquake.

Conduct earthquake drills with your family.

When the Ground Moves

Doorways are not always a safe place to be during an earthquake.

When the Shaking Stops

Do not use candles, matches or open flames indoors because of the possibility of gas leaks.

If you live near coastal waters evacuate to high ground immediately.

- Securely fasten water heaters and gas appliances.
- Repair defective electrical wiring, leaky gas and inflexible utility connections.
- Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves. Fasten shelves to walls. Brace high and top-heavy objects.
- Store bottle foods, glass, china and other breakables on low shelves or in cabinets that can fasten shut.
- Anchor overhead lighting fixtures.
- Be sure house is firmly anchored to its foundation.
- Know where and how to shut off all utilities.
- Locate safe spots in each room.
- Identify danger zones in each room.
- Consider buying earthquake insurance.
- If indoors — take cover under sturdy furniture or against an inside wall, and hold on. **Drop, Cover & Hold.** Stay away from the kitchen!
- If outdoors — stay there. Move away from buildings, street lights and utility wires.
- In a high-rise building — take cover under sturdy furniture away from windows and outside walls. Stay in the building on the same floor. An evacuation may not be necessary. Wait for instructions from safety personnel. **Do not use elevators.**
- In a vehicle — stop as quickly as safety permits, and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses or utility wires.
- If the electricity is out — use flashlights or battery powered lanterns.
- If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound — open a window and leave the building. Shut off the main gas valve outside.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Check for injuries; yourself and those around you.
- If there is electrical damage — switch off the power at the main control panel.
- If water pipes are damaged — shut off the water supply at the main valve.
- Wear sturdy shoes in areas covered with fallen debris and broken glass.
- Check your home for structural damage. Check chimneys for damage.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids.
- Visually inspect utility lines and appliances for damage.
- Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are intact.
- Open cabinets cautiously. Beware of objects that can fall off shelves.

- Use the phone only to report a life threatening emergency.
- Listen to news reports for the latest emergency information.
- Stay off the streets.
- Stay away from damaged areas, unless your assistance has been specifically requested by proper authorities.
- Be aware of possible high water due to dam failures. Go to high ground and remain there until you are told it is safe to return to home.



Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Getting Prepared

Dress for the weather and keep a “winter car kit” in the trunk of your car.

During a Winter Storm

When using kerosene heaters, maintain ventilation to avoid a build-up of toxic fumes.

- Know the terms used by weather forecasters.
- Consider purchasing a battery-powered NOAA weather radio and stock extra batteries.
- Keep rock salt to melt ice on walkways and sand to improve traction.
- Make sure you have sufficient heating fuel.
- Make sure you have an alternate heat source and a supply of fuel.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic.
- Insulate walls and attics.
- Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows.
- Keep your car “winterized” with antifreeze. Use snow tires.
- Listen to the radio or television for weather reports and emergency information.
- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, light-weight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.
- Wear mittens instead of gloves.
- Wear a hat — most body heat is lost through the top of the head.
- Avoid overexertion.
- Watch for signs of frostbite. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Conserve fuel if necessary by keeping your house cooler than normal.
- Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.
- If you must travel consider using public transportation.
- Shelter pets inside a protected structure.

Caught in Your Car During a Blizzard

Remain in your vehicle and wait to be found.

- Pull off the highway and set your hazard lights to flash. Hang a distress flag from the radio antenna.
- Run the engine and heater about ten minutes each hour to keep warm. While the engine is running, slightly open a window and keep the exhaust pipe free of snow.
- Exercise lightly to maintain body heat. Huddle with passengers to stay warm.
- Take turns sleeping.
- Be careful not to run the car battery down.
- If stranded in a remote rural or wilderness area, spread a large cloth over the snow to attract attention of rescue personnel.
- Once the blizzard passes, you may need to leave the car and proceed on foot.



Power Outages

Getting Prepared

Cordless phones do not work when the power is out.

- Register life-sustaining equipment with your utility.
- Consider purchasing a small generator or know where to rent one if you use life sustaining equipment that requires electrical power.
- Post the telephone number of the New Construction, Repairs and Power Outage listing of your local utility.
- If you own an electric garage door opener, learn how to open the door without power.
- Prepare a power outage kit. For short duration outages consider having glow light sticks, flashlights, battery powered radio, extra batteries and a wind-up clock on hand.
- Make sure you have an alternate heat source and a supply of fuel.
- Have a corded telephone available.
- When installing generators, follow the guidelines on page 14 of this handbook.

When the Lights Go Out

Report power outages to the utility company.

- If your house is the only one without power, check your fuse box or circuit breaker panel. Turn off large appliances before replacing fuses or resetting circuits.
- If power is out in the neighborhood, disconnect all electrical heaters and appliances to reduce the initial demand and protect the motors from possible low voltage damage.
- If you leave home, turn off or unplug heat producing appliances.
- Unplug computers and other voltage sensitive equipment to protect them against possible surges when power is restored.
- Conserve water, especially if you are on a well.

- Keep doors, windows and draperies closed to retain heat in your home.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. If the door remains closed, a fully loaded freezer can keep foods frozen for two days.
- Be extremely careful of fire hazards caused by candles or other flammable light sources.
- When using kerosene heaters, gas lanterns or stoves inside the house, maintain ventilation to avoid a build-up of toxic fumes. *Never use charcoal or gas barbeques inside; they produce carbon monoxide.* A natural or LP gas heater (e.g. gas logs, etc.) — **not** butane — is a good source of auxiliary heat during power outages. Neither requires electricity, but care must be taken to make sure they are properly installed.
- Connect lights and appliances directly to a generator, not to an existing electrical system.

NOTE: Leave one light switch in the on position to alert you when service is restored.



Hazardous Materials (Incidents or Attacks)

Getting Prepared

Evaluate the risks to your family.

- Ask about emergency warning procedures. (See page 4 of this handbook)
- Ask your Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) about where reportable quantities of extremely hazardous substances are stored and where they are used and about community plans for responding to hazardous material accidents by contacting the Lexington County Department of Public Safety (803.359.8141).
- Determine how close you are to freeways, railroads or factories which may be used to transport or produce toxic materials.
- Be prepared to evacuate.
- Have materials available to seal off your residence from airborne contamination. (For more on “shelter-in-place” action, see page 28 of this handbook.)
- If you are a witness to an event such as an accident, a spill, or a release, call 911 or your local fire department.
- If you hear a warning signal, listen to local radio or television stations for further information. Follow all instructions.
- Stay away from the incident site to minimize the risk of contamination and keep children and pets away from the site.
- If caught outside — stay upstream, uphill or upwind. Try to go one-half mile (10 city blocks) from the danger area.
- If you are in a car — close windows and shut off ventilation.
- Evacuate if told to do so.
- If local officials say there is time, close all windows, shut vents, and turn off attic fans and other ventilation systems to minimize contamination.
- To reduce the possibility of toxic vapors entering your home, seal all entry routes as efficiently as possible.

Responding to a Hazardous Material Incident

Strictly follow all instructions given by emergency authorities.

After a Hazmat Incident

Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.

- If an explosion is imminent — close drapes, curtains and shades.
- If you suspect gas or vapor contamination — take shallow breaths through a cloth or towel.
- Avoid contact with any spilled liquid materials, airborne mist or condensed solid chemical deposits.
- Do not eat or drink any food or water that may have been contaminated.
- Seek medical help for unusual symptoms.
- If medical help is not immediately available and you suspect contamination — remove all clothing and shower thoroughly.
- Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers without allowing them to contact other materials: get directions for proper disposal.
- Advise others of your possible contamination.
- Get direction from local authorities on how to clean up your land and property.
- Return home only when directed to do so.
- Upon returning home, ventilate the house.
- Report lingering vapors or other hazards.



Nuclear Power Plants

Getting Prepared

Time, distance and shielding are the keys to minimizing radioactive exposure.

- Know the terms that describe a nuclear emergency:
 - Notification of Unusual Event
 - Alert
 - Site Area Emergency
 - General Emergency
- Learn your community's warning system. Commercial nuclear power plants are required to install sirens and other warning systems within a ten mile radius of a nuclear power plant (See page 4).
- Obtain public emergency information materials from the company operating the plant.
- Learn the emergency plans for schools, day care centers, nursing homes and other places where members of your family might be.
- Be prepared to evacuate.
- Keep calm. Not all incidents result in the release of radiation.
- Stay tuned to your local radio or television stations for information.
- Evacuate if you are advised to do so.
 - Close and lock home doors and windows.
 - Keep car windows and vents closed; use recirculating air.
 - Listen to the radio for evacuation routes and other information.
 - Take pets with you unless you are going to a public shelter.

Responding to a Power Plant Emergency

Local instructions take precedence over advise in the handbook.

- If not ordered to evacuate — stay indoors.
 - Close doors and windows.
 - Turn off air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace and other air intakes; close chimney flues.
 - Go to a basement or other underground area if possible.
 - Keep a battery-powered radio handy at all times.
 - If you must go outdoors — cover your nose and mouth with a handkerchief.
 - Bring pets inside.
- Shelter livestock and give them stored feed, if time permits.
- Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.
- If you have just been outdoors — shower and change clothes. Put clothing and shoes in a plastic bag; seal it up and store it out of the way.

Three ways to purify water

In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain agents that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. You should purify all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene.

There are many ways to purify water. None is perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods.

Two easy purification methods are outlined below. These measures will kill most microbes but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Before purifying, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel or clean cloth. A third, more difficult method, distillation, is also described below.

1 Boiling. Boiling is the safest method of purifying water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, 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 will also improve the taste of stored water.

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

Add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

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

NOTE: While the two methods described above will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes that resist these methods, and heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals.

3 Distillation. Distillation involves boiling water and then collecting the vapor that condenses back to water. The condensed vapor will not include salt and 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.

Shelter-in-Place

In the event of a nuclear, biological or chemical event or accident, there may not be sufficient time or it may not be advisable to evacuate affected areas. "Shelter-in-place" plans should be used under these circumstances.

In an emergency where hazardous materials have been released into the atmosphere, it may be necessary to "shelter-in-place." This is a precaution aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.)

Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. If you are told to "shelter-in-place," keep your radio or TV on to receive instructions and updates.

As with any emergency procedure, pre-planning is essential and requires some purchases, such as the following:

Required Materials ***

- 500 sq. ft. of 2, 3 or 4 mil Plastic Sheetting
- 2 rolls Duct Tape
- Bath Size Cloth Towels
- Battery powered radio or TV for official emergency broadcasts & lantern(s) or flashlights with spare batteries
- Important prescription medications
- First aid kit



***** NOTE: The "Required Materials" are minimums and should be expanded based on your plan!**

Optional Materials

- Sleeping bag(s) or blanket(s) & Coat(s)
- Books, games or other diversions
- Cordless or Cellular Telephone
- Drinking Water, 1 gal / person / day
- Plastic or rubber Weather Stripping
- 72 hour kit for each person and pet
- Port-A-Potty made of a 5-gallon bucket lined with garbage bags. Pet litter material for pets. Use RV/holding tank chemicals or a pail of dirt to cover wastes



Planning

- Locate interior, second story or higher room(s) with as few vents, windows and doors as possible. DO NOT use basements or other underground enclosures as many agents are heavier than air and settle into lower levels. It is ideal to select a room with a hard-wired telephone in the room as cellular equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged in an emergency.
- Store above materials in each safe room in unlocked closet(s).
- Determine maximum occupancy by multiplying the room's width by its length and dividing by thirty-six. This is the number of people that can remain "sealed in" for up to two hours. (A 360 sq. ft. room can accommodate ten people for 1 to 2 hours.)
- Precut plastic sheathing 2 inches wider than the dimensions of each window, vent, door, electrical outlets, phone jacks or other opening that leads to the outside and mark each sheet for quick installation.
- Install weather stripping around door(s) and window(s) where possible.
- Hold a meeting with all members of the household or employees of your business. Discuss the location of materials and equipment, installation and emergency notification procedures to be used, and hold regular drills to practice the plan.

When a Warning is Issued

- Do not attempt to get your children from day care or school facilities—staff members there have been trained to protect your children and will initiate shelter-in-place procedures where they are located.
- If visitors or customers are present, ask them to stay, not leave.
- If radiological contamination is suspected, persons coming from the outside should shower if possible, and change clothes immediately with the old clothes sealed in a plastic bag.
- Immediately gather any supplies or materials stored outside the room(s), including pet food, and make sure the radio is working.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows, close all drapes and curtains.
- Turn off all air handling systems such as furnaces, air conditioners & exchangers and close all flues, dampers and vent covers.
- Gather all occupants, including pets, enter the room(s) and close and lock the door behind the last person.
- Soak bath towels in water and jam into openings under doors or in open vents.
- Install pre-cut plastic sheathing by taping around the edges of windows, doors, electric outlets, phone jacks, cable TV boxes, heat/ac vents and any other opening to the exterior to form a seal; (Note: Instructions to "shelter-in-place" are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks. There is little danger that the room in which you are taking shelter will run out of oxygen and you will suffocate.)

- Turn on your radio, tune in your local "official news" station and listen for further instructions.
- Stay off the phone, it should be used for emergency purposes only.
- Emergency officials may decide that an evacuation of the area is the appropriate next step. Preparations for evacuation should be discussed and begun during in-place-sheltering if evacuation is mentioned as a possibility.
- Bring pets inside.
- You should not try to shelter-in-place in a vehicle unless you have no other choice. Vehicles are not airtight enough to give you adequate protection from many types of airborne hazards.
 - If you are close to home or other available shelter, go there immediately.
 - If there is no available shelter:
 - Pull off the road in a safe, shady/sheltered spot, turn off the engine and close windows and vents.
 - If possible seal the heating/ air conditioning vents with duct tape.
 - Listen regularly to the radio for advice and instructions.
 - Stay put until you hear it is safe to get back on the road. Then follow the traffic directions of public safety officials, as some roads may be closed or traffic detoured.

After an Emergency

- Carefully remove and dispose of the tape, the bath towels and the plastic sheathing exercising care when removing and disposing of these materials in order to minimize contamination of your safe room(s) from residual agents.
- When possible, hire a disaster cleanup company or other professional decontamination service to insure the premises is safe for occupancy.
- Open doors and windows.
- Turn on your heating/cooling system to ventilate the structure.
- Be cautious about letting pets out. Storm damage may cause pets to become disoriented or lost. Fallen power lines and other conditions following an emergency can pose life-threatening risks to pets.

Evacuation

- Authorities may decide to evacuate an area for your protection. It is important to stay calm, listen carefully and follow all instructions.
- If you are told to evacuate, listen to your radio to make sure the evacuation order applies to you and to understand how much time you have to pack essentials. Advance warning of approaching hazards may be as little as 5 minutes to as long as several hours.
- If you are told to evacuate immediately:
 - Close and lock your windows.
 - Shut off all vents, furnaces, air conditioning units, and air exchange units.
 - You do not need to turn off your refrigerator or freezer, but you should turn off all other appliances and lights before locking your home as you leave.
 - Lock the doors.
 - Move quickly and calmly.
- Check on neighbors to make sure they have been notified, and offer help to those with disabilities or other special needs.
- Take only one car and carpool to the evacuation site.
- Close your car windows and air vents and turn off the heater or air conditioner.
- Do not take Shortcuts because a shortcut may put you in the path of danger. For your safety, follow the exact route you are told to take.

Online Resources

Federal Government

FirstGov

The Official Web Portal of the US Federal Government
<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program

Residential Shelter-in-Place
<http://emc.ornl.gov/CSEPPweb/SIP/SIP.htm>

CitizenCorps.gov

<http://www.citizencorps.gov/>

Department of Education

Emergency Preparedness Plans for Schools
<http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan/>

Department of Health and Human Services

Disasters and Emergencies
<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/index.shtml>

Disaster Help

<https://disasterhelp.gov/portal/jhtml/index.jhtml>

Anti-Terror

<https://disasterhelp.gov/portal/jhtml/community.jhtml?community=Acts+of+Terror&index=0&id=19>

Environmental Protection Agency

Emergency Preparedness
<http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/emergencypreparedness.html>

Federal Citizen Information Center

<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency

<http://www.fema.gov/>

FirstGov for Consumers

<http://www.consumer.gov/>

Threat Alert System

Information for Citizens
<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=29>

USA Freedom Corps

<http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/>

Non-Profit Organizations

The Ad Council

The country's leading producer of public service advertisements (PSAs) since 1942. Click this link to view all of the Ready Campaign's PSAs.

<http://www.adcouncil.org/>

American Association of Retired Persons

<http://www.aarp.org/>

American Medical Association

Disaster Preparedness and Medical Response

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/6206.html>

American Red Cross

Terrorism - Preparing for the Unexpected

<http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/keepsafe/unexpected.html>

Boy Scouts of America

<http://www.scouting.org/>

Disaster Relief

Library - Preparedness

<http://www.disasterrelief.org/Library/Prepare/>

Girl Scouts of the USA

<http://www.girlscouts.org/>

Home Safety Council

<http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/>

National Safety Council

<http://www.nsc.org/>

Neighborhood Watch

Safety Tips

<http://www.usaonwatch.org/tips.asp>

Points of Light & Volunteer Center National Network

Organization Coordinating Unaffiliated Volunteers in Disasters

<http://www.pointsoflight.org/>

State Agencies

Homeland Security

http://www.myscgov.com/SCSGPortal/static/law_enforcement_tem1.html

Emergency Management Division

<http://www.state.sc.us/emd/>

Traveling With Pets

<http://www.interpetexplorer.com>

<http://www.petsonthego.com>

<http://www.petswelcome.com>

<http://www.surfnpet.com>

<http://www.takeyourpet.com>

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Out-of-Area Contact

Name _____
 City _____
 Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Local Contact

Name _____
 City _____
 Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Nearest Relative

Name _____
 City _____
 Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Family Work Numbers

Father _____ Mother _____
 Other _____

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Police Department _____
 Fire Department _____
 Hospital _____

Family Physicians

Name _____ Telephone _____
 Name _____ Telephone _____
 Name _____ Telephone _____

Reunion Locations

1. Right outside your home _____
2. Away from the neighborhood, in case you cannot return home

 Address _____
 Telephone _____
 Route to try first _____

The **Out-Of-Area Contact** is one of the most important concepts in your disaster plan. When disaster occurs, you will be concerned about the welfare of your loved ones.

In a disaster, local telephone service may be disrupted. However, long distance lines, because they are routed many different ways out of your community, may be open. It is also important to remember that the telephone company's emergency telephone network is the pay telephone system. They will restore it before the rest of the system. So, if you have change to make a pay telephone call and an out-of-area contact, you may be able to communicate with loved ones in the disaster area indirectly through your out-of-area contact.

Reunion Points. After a disaster it may be impossible for family members to return home for one reason or another. It is very important that you select a meeting point in the community where you can once again join the members of your household.

Notes

Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives.