

## **Emergency Preparedness - *Gear Up. Get Ready! It can happen!***

Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Combined Statistical Area emergency preparedness program aimed at motivating individuals to plan for emergencies and catastrophic situations. When it happens, do you think you will have time to Get Informed, Get Prepared, and Be Ready! Get Ready Now!

### **About Us**

In an effort to help citizens get informed, be prepared and take action, the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) launched the Gear Up. Get Ready! campaign across the CSA!

The Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) was initiated in 2008. RCPGP is focused on increasing catastrophic preparedness planning in high risk, high consequence areas. The central objectives of the grant program is to build a regional planning process within planning communities, fix shortcomings in existing plans and link operational needs to resource allocation. The latter provides the ability of the grant to promote citizen preparedness through messaging and outreach. Our resource allocation is our ability to promote readiness and citizen preparedness steering toward the operational necessity of being prepared, not just talking about it. Our team will be reaching out to the citizens of the Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Combined Statistical Area with the one common goal of driving action toward preparedness.

“Being prepared requires a whole community approach and we are excited to work with the local emergency managers and volunteers to provide educational tools and resources to our neighbors.”- Yvette Alexander-Maxie, Director, Community Programs and Volunteer Resources American Red Cross and Co-Chair of Citizen Preparedness Subcommittee of the IL-IN-WI RCPT

“We want to encourage everyone to take actionable steps because actions taken by households can save lives and build community resilience”.- Earl Mashaw, Project Manager Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program

## **Get Ready**

Take preparedness actions for local and regional disasters!

When disaster strikes you will be the first to respond. The reality is that depending on the emergency it can take days for help to come, but in all cases you are there and can respond!

Take the first steps towards getting ready to take care of yourself and your family.

## **What Will You Need?**

In extreme situations resources may not be immediately available to you. Take action today and develop an emergency kit. Your emergency kit contains basic items you and your family may need if an emergency happens. Most of these items can be found around your home, and should be collected into one place before a disaster happens in case you need to evacuate at a moment's notice. If you do not have these items, consider low-cost sources in your community to purchase them - such as your discount grocery store or retailer. Also, consider making additional purchases over time to increase your preparedness while making the kit affordable.

Remember to check your kit on a regular basis. Some items in the kit can expire - like canned food and bottled water. If you check your kit regularly, you can swap out these items with fresh supplies and use the canned goods for regular purposes, like including them in lunch or dinner.

**Bottled Water** – Your kit should contain at least one gallon of water, per person, per day. If you have pets, include additional water.

**Non-perishable Food** - Keep three days worth of non-perishable food in your kit for each family member. Non-perishable foods may include canned goods, peanut butter, dried fruit, or ready-to-eat meals purchased from a military surplus store. Remember to account for the needs of each family member, including dietary restrictions or food for infants.

**NOAA Radio** - Your NOAA weather radio is a continually broadcasting radio station that provides information on all emergencies. This includes broadcasting information on weather disasters that might impact your community as well as other types of disasters that might have already happened. These radios can be purchased at drug stores, major retailers, and on the Internet. Your local office of emergency management (link to the page of listings) may be able to help you program your radio. Don't forget to include batteries for your radio, and remember to replace these batteries on a regular basis, such as at daylight savings.

**Flashlight & Batteries**- If the power goes out, it is not safe to use candles because candles are a fire hazard and there may be gas leaks which make flames unsafe. Keep a flashlight and batteries in your kit, and remember to replace these batteries on a regular basis, such as at daylight savings.

**Personal Hygiene** -This may include feminine supplies or other personal items like toothpaste or deodorant.

**First Aid Kit** - Your first aid kit can be used if you or someone in your family is hurt during an emergency. It is important that all family members know where it is, and how to use it. Make sure your kit includes the basics, such as sterile gloves, soap or antibiotic towelettes, ointment for burns, and aspirin. **Full list of recommended supplies.** (<http://www.ready.gov/basic-disaster-supplies-kit>)

**Whistle**- If you are trapped after a disaster, a whistle can help you signal for help. This will help first responders know where you are and

will help keep you safer by limiting the amount of dust or pollutants in the air.

**Manual Can Opener-** Remember to keep a manual can opener in your kit for your non-perishable canned goods. If the power is out, you cannot use an electronic can opener.

**Copies of Important Documents** - Keep copies of important family documents in a kit - such as insurance policies, identification and bank account information. This should be kept in a waterproof container - such as a ziplock bag - to help protect the information.

**Blanket/Towel** - Keep warm blankets in your kit for each member of your family - especially if you live in a cold climate. Include towels as well to help your family stay dry.

**Change of Clothes** - Keep a change of clothing for each family member in your kit. Include durable and comfortable shoes, long pants and a long sleeve shirt. If you live in a cold climate, consider adding additional warm clothing in the kit.

**Durable Water Proof Container** - Assemble all of your items in a durable waterproof or water safe container. This will allow you and your family to have everything you need in one place if you need to evacuate.

Calculate the amount of items your family will need with the **Emergency Preparedness Supplies Calculator**.

([http://www.whatifcolorado.com/emergency\\_kit\\_calculator.asp](http://www.whatifcolorado.com/emergency_kit_calculator.asp))

**Other kits:**

**Vehicle Emergency Kit**

Roadside emergencies can happen at any time and under any circumstances. Keep a kit of emergency supplies in your car in case you are stranded, or that you need to evacuate at a moment's notice.

+ A basic car kit includes:

- Food

- Water
- First aid supplies
- Flares
- Jumper cables

Additional items to include:

- Cell phone and charger
- Fire extinguisher
- Warning light, hazard triangle or flares
- Extra clothing, especially a blanket, hat and jacket in the winter
- Auto-club card or roadside-assistance number (if you belong to an auto club or roadside-assistance program)
- \$20 in small bills and change

- Pen and pad of paper
- Jack and lug wrench, in case of a flat tire
- Weather-proof flashlight
- Gloves, hand cleaner and clean rags
- Tire gauge
- Help sign
- Windshield scraper
- Bag of cat litter (even if you don't have a cat!)

Cat litter can provide traction on slick surfaces, specifically roads that are icy in the winter.

Tools and supplies, such as fuses, wrenches, screwdrivers, wire cutters, a knife, and hose and repair kits can be helpful during an emergency, specifically if your car breaks down

## **Go Kit**

A Go Kit should be easily accessible if you have to leave your home in a hurry, and each household member's Go Kit should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack. Make sure it is ready to go at all times of the year and contains items suitable for the season.

**+The following should be a part of your Go Kit:**

- Food & Water
  - Bottled water and non-perishable, ready-to-eat and lightweight foods such as energy or granola bars.
- Flashlight
  - Hand crank model preferred or have extra batteries
- Radio
  - Hand crank model preferred or have extra batteries
  - Manual can opener if you have canned goods in your kit
- Phone
  - Wireless phone, fully charged
- Documents
  - Copies of important documents (insurance cards, photo IDs, proof of address) in waterproof, portable container like a zip lock bag
- Emergency Card
  - List of local, out-of-state, family and emergency contact information
- Personal hygiene items
  - Soap, feminine products, toothbrush, toothpaste, toilet paper, etc
- Whistle
- First Aid Kit
- Cash
- An extra set of keys for your home and your car
- Matches in a water proof container
- Compact mess kits for eating and preparing meals
- Paper, pencil and tape
- Tarp, tent, or poncho for rain or inclement weather
- A recent family photo for identification

Remember to account for your family's special needs. This might include child care items for infants, family medications, and pet supplies. Keep a list of all medications taken by your household, dosages, and information regarding your physicians in your Go Kit.

For additional information on what you might need or what you might do if a disaster happens in your community, visit the following websites:

### **Will You Know Where to Go?**

Take preparedness actions for local and regional disasters!

When disaster strikes you will be the first to respond. The reality is that depending on the emergency it can take days for help to come, but in all cases you are there and can respond!

Take the first steps towards getting ready to take care of yourself and your family.

### **Will You Know Where to Go?**

Your local emergency officials have information on emergencies that might impact your community, such as how to get information if a disaster happens, how to evacuate and how you can sign-up for more information. Please see below for your local emergency management agency site.

### **Click below for specific information pertaining to your state.**

Ready Illinois (Icon + Link)

Ready Indiana (Icon + Link)

Ready Wisconsin (Icon + Link)

Ready.gov (Icon + Link)

### **Click below for specific information pertaining to the City of Chicago.**

<http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/oem.html>

### **Click below for specific information pertaining to your county.**

(use tiles again to show the different county sites, use images from their own sites or their county logos, etc. link to their sites, open in a different tab.

### **Where Will You Reconnect With Your Family?**

Take preparedness actions for local and regional disasters!

When disaster strikes you will be the first to respond. The reality is that depending on the emergency it can take days for help to come, but in all cases you are there and can respond!

Take the first steps towards getting ready to take care of yourself and your family.

### **Where Will You Reconnect With Your Family?**

Having an emergency plan in place before an emergency or disaster allows you to determine how to protect yourself and your family and how to get back in touch with your family in an emergency: floods, fire, severe storms, etc. It is important to ensure the whole family is a part of the planning process so that your plan addresses everyone's needs. This might include your kids, elderly family members, or even neighbors. A Family Emergency Plan will help you identify what to do in different emergencies and to talk with those you love about how to get in touch with each other.

A part of developing your emergency plan is to familiarize yourself with emergency plans at places that are a part of your everyday life, such as school, work, church, or day care.

## **Disasters**

### **Cybercrime and Cyber Terrorism**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Cybercrime and Cyber Terrorism**

Unlike physical threats that prompt immediate action, cyber threats are often difficult to identify and understand. Cyber threats include viruses that erase entire systems, intruders that break into computers and alter files, intruders using your computer to attack others, or intruders stealing confidential information from your computer. The spectrum of cyber risks is limitless; threats can have wide-ranging effects on the individual, community, organizational, and national level.

### **+ Potential Impacts of Cybercrime**

- Organized cybercrime, state-sponsored hackers, and cyber espionage can pose national security risks to our country.
- Transportation, power, and other services may be disrupted by large scale cyber incidents. The extent of the disruption is highly uncertain, as it will be determined by many unknown factors such as the target and size of the incident.
- Vulnerability to data breach and loss increases if an organization's network is compromised. Information about a company, its employees, and its customers can be at risk.
- Individually-owned devices such as computers, tablets, mobile phones, and gaming systems that connect to the Internet are vulnerable to intrusion. Personal information may be at risk without proper security.

You can find more detailed information about current concerns from the Department of Homeland Security's website. Your personal computer anti-virus/security software provider will also have more information to properly protect your computer and devices.

## **Before**

You can increase your chances of avoiding cyber risks by setting up the proper controls and sharing information with your friends and family when known risks exist.

#### + Three Steps to Be Ready

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should cybercrime or cyber terrorism occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

#### + Personal Computing

- Only connect to the Internet over secure, password-protected networks.
- Do not click on links or pop-ups, open attachments, or respond to emails from strangers.
- If you are unsure of the sender, do not click on URLs. Instead, enter a URL by hand or do not visit the URL at all.
- Do not respond to online requests for Personally Identifiable Information (PII); most organizations – banks, universities, companies, etc. – do not ask for your personal information over the Internet. PII includes, but is not limited to, your full name, social security number, address, date of birth, place of birth, driver's

license number, vehicle registration plate number, credit card numbers, and physical appearance.

- Limit who you are sharing information with by reviewing the privacy settings on your social media accounts.
- Password protect all devices that connect to the Internet and user accounts. Create a “Strong” password that contains multiple characters, numbers, capitalized letters, and symbols when possible.
- Do not use the same password twice. Choose a password that means something to you and you only and change your passwords on a regular basis.
- If you see something suspicious, report it to the proper authorities.
- Do not open suspicious emails from senders that you do not know.

## **During**

If you know that you are the victim of a cyber attack, or if you know that an attack has occurred, you should take actions to ensure that your personal data is protected.

### **+ Immediate Actions**

- Check to make sure the software on all of your systems is up-to-date.
- Run a scan to make sure your system is not infected or acting suspiciously.
- If you find a problem, disconnect your device from the Internet and perform a full system restore.

### **+ At Home**

- Disconnect your device (computer, gaming system, tablet, etc.) from the Internet. By removing the Internet connection, you prevent an attacker or virus from being able to access your computer and perform tasks such as locating personal data, manipulating or deleting files, or using your device to attack others.
- If you have anti-virus software installed on your computer, update the virus definitions (if possible), and perform a manual scan of your entire system. Install all of the appropriate patches to fix known vulnerabilities.

#### + At Work

- If you have access to an information technology (IT) department, contact them immediately. The sooner they can investigate and clean your computer, the less damage to your computer and other computers on the network.
- If you believe you might have revealed sensitive information about your organization, report it to the appropriate people within the organization, including network administrators. They can be alert for any suspicious or unusual activity.

#### + At a Public Place (library, school, etc.)

- Immediately inform a librarian, teacher, or manager in charge. If they have access to an IT department, contact them immediately.

#### + If Your PII is Compromised

- Immediately change all passwords, beginning with your financial passwords. If you used the same password for multiple resources, make sure to change it for each account, and do not use that password in the future.

- If you believe the compromise was caused by malicious code, disconnect your computer from the Internet.
- Restart your computer in safe mode and perform a full system restore.
- Contact companies, including banks, where you have accounts as well as credit reporting companies.
- Close any accounts that may have been compromised. Watch for any unexplainable or unauthorized charges to your accounts.

## **After**

After a cyber attack that personally impacts your information or your organization's information, you should take actions to ensure that your data is protected and that appropriate reports are made to local law enforcement.

### **+ Report the Attack**

- File a report with the local police so there is an official record of the incident.
- Report online crime or fraud to your local United States Secret Service (USSS) Electronic Crimes Task Force or the Internet Crime Complaint Center.
- Report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission.

### **+ Protect Your Information**

- If your PII was compromised, consider other information that may be at risk. Depending what information was stolen, you may need to contact other agencies; for example, if someone has gained access to your Social Security number, contact the Social Security

Administration. You should also contact the Department of Motor Vehicles if your driver's license or car registration has been stolen.

## **Earthquakes**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Earthquakes**

An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock deep underground. Earthquakes themselves rarely cause death or injury - most deaths and injuries occur by falling objects and debris or when buildings collapse. Although earthquakes are sometimes believed to be a West Coast phenomenon, there are actually 45 states and territories throughout the United States that are at moderate to high risk of experiencing earthquakes.

Earthquakes are sudden and unpredictable, so it is important for you and your family to prepare ahead of time.

### **+ What You Need to Know**

Indiana and Illinois lie in the most seismically active region east of the Rocky Mountains. This region consists of two main areas, the New Madrid Seismic Zone and the Wabash Valley Seismic Zone. These zones – or areas that are prone to earthquakes from one fault - include many geologic faults that are capable of producing earthquakes. Jasper County, IN is located in close proximity to many of these potentially unstable faults.

## **Know Terms Frequently Used for Earthquake Events**

### **+ Earthquake**

A sudden slipping or movement of a portion of the earth's crust accompanied and followed by a series of vibrations.

### **+ Aftershock**

An earthquake of similar or lesser intensity that follows the main earthquake.

#### + Fault

The break in the earth's crust which moves during an earthquake. The movement may range from less than an inch to more than 10 yards in a severe earthquake.

#### + Epicenter

The place on the earth's surface where the earthquake rupture began. Once fault slippage begins, it expands along the fault during the earthquake and can extend hundreds of miles.

#### + Seismic Waves

Vibrations that travel outward from the earthquake fault at speeds of several miles per second. Although fault slippage by itself can cause considerable damage, the vibrations of seismic waves cause most of the destruction during earthquakes.

#### + Magnitude

The amount of energy released during an earthquake, which is computed from the amplitude of the seismic waves. A magnitude of 7.0 on the Richter Scale indicates an extremely strong earthquake. Each whole number on the scale represents an increase of about 30 times more energy released than the previous whole number represents. Therefore, an earthquake measuring 6.0 is about 30 times more powerful than one measuring 5.0.

### **Before**

Before an earthquake, hold drills with your family members so everyone knows what to do. These drills should include identifying safe areas in your house as well as potential hazards that might exist around your house.

#### + Three Steps to Be Ready

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should an earthquake occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

#### + Additional Supplies

To be ready for earthquakes you should add dust masks, plastic sheeting, duct tape and scissors to your basic emergency kit.

#### + Insurance

- If you rent your home, renter's insurance is a great solution to protect yourself and your family from the cost of repairs and replacing your belongings.
- If you own your home, homeowner's insurance is the best way to be prepared for the costs associated with repairing cracked foundations, water or fire damage and paying to replace any destroyed belongings.

#### + Prepare Your Home

- Store breakable items such as dishes, glasses and bottled foods in cabinets that close and latch securely.
- Fasten shelves securely to walls and place large or heavy objects on lower shelves will help reduce injuries during an earthquake.
- Anchor overhead lighting fixtures and hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches, and anywhere people sit.
- Take a look at your house and locate safe spots in each room under a sturdy table or against an inside wall.

- Have a licensed professional repair inflexible utility connections, defective electrical wiring and leaky gas lines. Flexible fittings are more resistant to damage.

## **During**

Earthquakes occur suddenly and without warning, the best action for you and your family will typically be to shelter in place. Remain calm, stop and take cover from falling debris.

### **+ If You are Indoors**

- Take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or bench or against an inside wall, and hold on. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- If you are in bed when the earthquake strikes, stay there (unless your bed is under a heavy light fixture, if so move to the nearest safe place). Hold on and protect your head with a pillow.
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, load bearing doorway.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Most injuries during earthquakes occur when people are hit by falling objects when entering into or exiting from buildings.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on. Do not use the elevators.

### **+ If You are Outdoors**

- Stay there. Move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.

### **+ If You are in a Moving Vehicle**

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses and utility wires.
  - Do not attempt to drive across bridges or overpasses that appear to have been damaged.
- + If you are Trapped Under Debris
- Do not light a match or use a cigarette lighter.
  - If possible, cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing. Do not move about or kick up dust.
  - Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort, as shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

### **After**

After an earthquake, be prepared for aftershocks. Assess your environment for hazards like broken glass, fallen trees or downed power lines before you move from your location. Remember that unless you need to evacuate or are instructed to evacuate, stay off of the roads to keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles. If you do evacuate, leave a message at home letting family, friends, and / or local officials know where you can be found.

- + Check for damage to your home
- Check for gas and water leaks, 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. Check for downed power lines; warn others to stay away.
  - Check your building for cracks and damage, including the roof, chimneys and foundation.

#### + Gain additional information

- Avoid using the phone unless you are in a life-threatening situation.
- Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports. For your own safety, cooperate fully with public safety officials and follow instructions.

### **Extreme Heat**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

### **Extreme Heat**

Heat is the number one weather-related killer in the United States. Heat kills by pushing the human body beyond its limits. In extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed and the body must work harder to maintain a normal temperature.

Conditions that can induce heat-related illnesses include poor air quality and little to no air circulation. As a result, people who live in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than those living in rural areas. Also, asphalt and concrete store heat longer and gradually release heat at night, which can produce higher nighttime temperatures.

Your best defense against heat-related illnesses is prevention. You can be prepared by knowing the symptoms of heat disorders and overexposure to the sun, staying hydrated and being ready to give first aid treatment.

### **Key terms**

#### + Excessive Heat Outlook

An excessive heat outlook is issued when the potential exists for an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days. An outlook provides information to those who need considerable lead time to prepare for the event, such as public utilities, emergency management and public health officials.

**+ Excessive Heat Watch**

An excessive heat watch is issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 12 to 48 hours. This means that the risk of a heat wave has increased, but its occurrence and timing is still uncertain. A watch provides enough lead time so those who need to prepare can do so, such as cities that have excessive heat event mitigation plans.

**+ Excessive Heat Warning/Advisory**

An excessive heat warning or advisory is issued when an excessive heat event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring in the upcoming 36 hours. The warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. An advisory is for less serious conditions that cause significant discomfort or inconvenience and, if caution is not taken, could lead to a threat to life and/or property.

**+ Conditions that may Result from Extreme Heat**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>First Aid Response</b>
Severe Sunburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skin redness</li> <li>• Pain</li> <li>• Possible swelling</li> <li>• Blisters</li> <li>• Fever</li> <li>• Headaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a shower</li> <li>• Use soap to clean skin</li> <li>• Apply dry, sterile dressing</li> <li>• Seek medical</li> </ul>

		attention
Heat Cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful spasms (in legs or abdomen)</li> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to cooler location</li> <li>• Gently stretch muscles to relieve spasms</li> <li>• Sips of cool water every 15 minutes</li> <li>• No caffeine, no alcohol</li> <li>• Discontinue liquids if nauseated</li> </ul>
Heat Exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• May be cool, pale, flushed or have normal body temperature</li> <li>• Fainting, dizziness</li> <li>• Exhaustion</li> <li>• Headaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lie down</li> <li>• Loosen or remove clothing</li> <li>• Apply cool, wet clothes or towels</li> <li>• Fan or seek air conditioning</li> <li>• Give sips of water if awake</li> <li>• Sips of cool water every 15 minutes</li> <li>• Discontinue liquids if nauseated</li> <li>• Seek immediate medical attention if vomiting begins</li> </ul>

Heat Stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High temperature of 103°F+</li> <li>• Hot, red, dry skin</li> <li>• Rapid pulse, weak or strong</li> <li>• No sweating</li> <li>• Dizziness, nausea and confusion</li> <li>• Possibly unconscious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Danger! Call 9-1-1</b></li> <li>• Move to cooler location</li> <li>• Remove clothing</li> <li>• Cool bath, sponging or cover in a cool, wet sheet</li> <li>• Watch breathing</li> <li>• Use extreme caution</li> <li>• Use fans and air conditioners</li> </ul>
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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) can issue the following heat-related products as conditions warrant. During extreme heat emergencies, you can find detailed information on your local TV and radio, the National Weather Service, NOAA.

### **Before**

Preparing for extreme heat can protect your family. There are steps you can take to make your home a better place to stay during periods of extreme heat.

#### + Three Steps to Be Ready

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family.

This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should extreme heat occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

#### + Prepare Your Home

- Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if needed.
- Check air conditioning ducts for proper insulation.
- Install temporary window reflectors for use between windows and drapes, such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings, or louvers. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.
- Keep storm windows up all year.

#### + Plan for Where to Go

- Find a public facility, such as a Library or mall that you can go to during the hottest parts of the day. Some jurisdictions open cooling centers or other places you and your family can go during extreme heat.

### **During**

During a heat emergency, there are ways that you can protect you and your family from illness and harm.

#### + In Your Home

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.

- Stay on the lowest floor out of the sun if air conditioning is not available. Heat rises.

#### + In Your Car

- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles. Poor air quality and little to no air circulation means that, even with the windows down, your children or pets will be in danger of heat related illness.

#### + Protect Your Family

- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals and avoid salt tablets unless otherwise directed.
- Drink plenty of water. Consult your doctor if you have medical fluid retention issues.
- Limit your intake of alcoholic beverages; they raise your body temperature.
- Dress in baggy, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect your face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat. Use sunscreen on exposed skin if you have to be outside.
- Avoid hard physical work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system and take frequent breaks.

#### + Where to Go

- Spend the warmest part of the day in public buildings (libraries, schools, malls, etc.) or in designated cooling facilities.

### **After**

During and after extreme heat events, remember to check up on family, friends, and neighbors who are alone and do not have air conditioning. If you are 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know anyone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day. After extreme heat conditions, it is still likely to be very warm. Continue to hydrate and protect yourself and your family from heat-related illness.

## **Fire**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Fires**

Fires affect thousands of Americans and cause billions of dollars in damage every year. Make sure that you and your family are aware of ways to keep yourselves and your home safe. Being aware and prepared can help prevent fires, save lives and minimize property damage.

### **+What you need to know**

Fires are often preventable. Because fires spread so quickly, they can be particularly deadly — becoming life threatening in two minutes and engulfing a residence in as little as five minutes. As the fire burns, poisonous gases are emitted that can cause you to become disoriented or drowsy. The leading cause of fire-related deaths is suffocation from lack of oxygen, outnumbering burns by three-to-one.

## **Before**

You can find detailed information about fires and wildfires on your local TV and radio, the National Weather Service, your local government's emergency management website and social media channels.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family.

This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on

critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a fire occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in Go Kit.

3 – Prepare a Go Kit for every family member. The Go Kit should be easily accessible if you have to leave your home in a hurry, and each household member's Go Kit should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack. Make sure it is ready to go at all times of the year and contains items suitable for the season.

### **+Get Prepared: Preparing & Preventing Fires**

The best supplies for fire preparedness are fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.

Keeping your home safe and making an Emergency Plan to deal with a house fire are important steps that you can take to protect yourself and your family.

### **+Keep your home safe:**

- Install a smoke alarm inside each sleeping area and on each level of your home.
- Place smoke alarms on every level of your residence, outside bedrooms on the ceiling or high on the wall (4 to 12 inches from ceiling), at the top of open stairways or at the bottom of enclosed stairs and near (but not in) the kitchen.
- Sleep with the doors closed. It slows the spread of the fire.
- Test each smoke alarm once a month and replace bad batteries immediately.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.

- Keep one or more working fire extinguishers in your home and know how to use them.
- Never leave something cooking on the stove unattended and keep the cooking area clutter-free.
- Keep matches and lighters safely out of reach of children.
- Place heaters at least three feet away from flammable material. Use extreme caution when using alternative heating sources, such as kerosene heaters.
- Check electrical wiring in your home and have it replaced if it appears frayed or cracked. Do not overload outlets or extension cords.
- Make sure your home's address can be clearly seen from the street.

**+Fire escape plan:**

- Make sure all family members know what to do in case of a fire.
- Draw a floor plan with at least two escape routes from every room of your home.
- Select a location outside your home where everyone will meet after escaping.
- Practice your escape plan at least once a month. You can even practice escaping with a blindfold on because the amount of smoke generated by a real fire will likely make it impossible to see.
- Consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second or third floor. Learn how to use them and store them near the window.
- Practice feeling the door before opening it. If the door is hot, get out another way.

## **During**

If you are in a situation where your home is on fire, remember that it is important to evacuate safely and quickly. The fire and the smoke are both dangerous to you and your family.

### **+Evacuate quickly and safely**

Get out of the building as quickly and safely as you can. Don't waste time gathering valuables or making a phone call. Once you're out of the building, don't go back in for any reason.

- If a door feels hot, do not open it. Do not open any doors except for the ones you have to escape through.
- If there is smoke in the house, stay low to the ground as you exit to avoid inhaling potentially toxic fumes.
- Teach children not to hide under beds or in closets in the event of a fire emergency, as this will make it more difficult for firefighters to find them.
- Use the stairs to escape and do not use an elevator.
- Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a location outside the house.

## **After You Escape**

After you and your family escape the building, find each other at the pre-designated meeting location in your family emergency plan to make sure everyone is safe and well. Remain calm and pace yourself because you may be in the position of taking care of other people. Listen carefully to what first responders say and deal patiently with urgent situations first. In addition:

- Give first aid where appropriate and have injuries examined and treated by a medical professional. Seriously injured or burned victims should be transported to professional medical help immediately.

- Stay out of damaged buildings. Return home only when local fire authorities say it is safe to enter.
- Discard food that has been exposed to heat, smoke, or soot.
- Contact your insurance agent.
- Don't discard damaged goods until after an inventory has been taken. Save receipts for money relating to fire loss.

## **Floods**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Floods**

Floods are one of the most common hazards in the U.S. for Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin, floods impact the State annually and are likely to occur in many jurisdictions. For example, since 1981, 99 of the 102 counties in Illinois have been declared major disaster areas by the President due to flooding.

## **What you need to know**

Not all floods are alike. Some floods develop slowly - often times over a period of days. Flash floods can develop quickly, sometimes in a matter of minutes and without any visible signs of rain. Flash floods often have a dangerous wall of roaring water that carries rocks, mud and other debris, sweeping away most things in its path. Here are terms that may be used by local officials to describe flooding in your community:

### **+ Flood Watch**

Flooding is possible.

### **+ Flash Flood Watch**

Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground.

### **+ Flood Warning**

Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.

### **+ Flash Flood Warning**

A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

### **Before**

Before an event, information about the risk of floods can be found on local television and radio, the National Weather Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. To find out about any potential flooding in your area, visit [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and input your zip code.

### **+Three Steps to Be Ready**

1- Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a flood occur.

2- Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in every Go Kit.

3 -Prepare a Go Kit for every family member. The Go Kit should be easily accessible if you have to leave your home in a hurry, and each household member's Go Kit should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack. Make sure it is ready to go at all times of the year and contains items suitable for the season.

### **+Get Prepared: Evacuate or Stay**

Floods are one of the emergencies that may require you to evacuate your home. You will need to stay tuned to local information so that you know if you need to evacuate. There are some actions you can take today to get prepared so that you will know what to do if you stay at home or if you need to leave.

- If you are not evacuating, plan for moving essential items to an upper floor and sticking to higher ground.
- If you are advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Evacuation is simple and safer before the flood waters rise. Don't forget the Go Kit of each family member, these should include the Emergency Contacts Card, and your Family Emergency Plan which includes your evacuation location options.
- Have your evacuation plan, and follow recommended routes.

**+ If you have to leave your home, remember these tips:**

- Do not walk through moving water, it is deceptively strong.
- If you have to walk through water, choose a route with still water.
- Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Do not drive into flooded areas because you and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

**+ If you are in a car**

- Do not drive into flooded areas.
- If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon it. Move to higher ground safely.
- Know that 6 inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- Be aware that most vehicles begin to float in just 12 inches of water. 24 inches of water will sweep most vehicles away, including SUVs and pick-ups.

**+ Other Actions To Take:**

- Find out if you live in a flood-prone area by visiting [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)
- Know if your property is above or below the flood stage water level and learn about the history of flooding for your region.
- Ask your insurance agent about flood insurance. Most homeowner and renter policies do not cover flood damage, but can be accessed through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Have check valves installed in building sewer traps to prevent flood waters from backing up in sewer drains
- Seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.
- Raise items in basements or at ground level to upper floors or higher off the ground to prevent damage if floodwater enters your home.

## **During**

During a flood it is important to be aware and knowledgeable on what's happening. Listen to news reports, secure important items to higher ground and get ready to make the decision to stay or go. The following are tips to help you:

### **+ Stay tuned for information**

Listen to the radio or television for information.

### **+ Flash Flood Possibility?**

Know that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move to higher ground right away. Do not wait for instructions to move.

### **+ Know of areas known to flood**

Be aware of streams, dry riverbeds, drainage channels and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without typical warnings like rain clouds or heavy rain.

### **+Secure your home**

If you must evacuate, secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor.

### **+Turn off Utilities**

Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if asked to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

## **After**

Many injuries take place after a flood happens. Flood waters, standing water and flood water residue pose various risks including injuries, infectious diseases and chemical hazards. These tips will help to keep you and your family safe from the aftermath of a flood:

### **+ Power Lines & Electrical Wiring**

Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the power company.

### **+ Structure damaged by flooding**

Wait before entering a structure damaged by flooding. Structures that have been damaged by flooding may not be safe to enter. Wait for the building to be inspected before entering. If the structure is deemed unsafe, arrangements will be made for you to be able to retrieve valuables left behind.

### **+ Look out for animals, especially snakes**

Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours, or in debris left on your property. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals.

### **+ Look before you step**

After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.

### **+ Gas leaks**

Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

### **+ Electricity**

Have your electricity turned off by the power company. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned, and dried.

### **+ News Reports**

Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.

### **+ Avoid floodwaters**

Water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals. You can use a solution of 1 cup of bleach to 5 gallons of water to disinfect surfaces, especially those that may come into contact with food or areas where small children play.

- Look out for any mold growth after a flood and learn about the best way to address any issues that you see.

## **Foodborne Illness**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Foodborne Illness**

Foodborne illness (sometime called food borne disease or food poisoning) is any illness resulting from the consumption of contaminated food, pathogenic bacteria, viruses, or parasites that contaminate food. Each year, 48 million people (1 in 6 Americans) in the U.S. get sick from contaminated food. Food can become contaminated through a variety of mechanisms and may occur at any stage in the process from food production to consumption.

### **+ Common Symptoms**

- Upset stomach
- Abdominal cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Dehydration

### **+ Common Causes**

- Inadequate hand washing
- Cross-contamination
- Storage and cooking temperatures
- Contamination of food by waste

You can find detailed information regarding foodborne illnesses by contacting your local public health department or by visiting the Center for Disease Control website.

## **Before**

At home, preventing foodborne illness mainly consists of good food safety practices. Many forms of food poisoning can be prevented, even if food is contaminated, by cooking it sufficiently, and either eating it quickly or refrigerating it effectively. Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before preparing food. If you are sick or have been sick in the past 3 days, do not prepare food for others.

## **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a foodborne illness occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

## **+ Keys to Safe Food at Home**

- Keep clean
- Separate raw and cooked foods
- Cook thoroughly
- Keep food at safe temperatures
- Use safe water and raw materials

## **+ Refrigeration**

Raw and cooked perishable foods—foods that can spoil—should be refrigerated or frozen promptly. If perishable foods stand at room temperature for more than 2 hours, they may not be safe to eat.

Refrigerators should be set at 40 degrees or lower and freezers should be set at 0 degrees.

## **+ Cooking Food**

Foods should be cooked long enough and at a high enough temperature to kill the harmful bacteria that cause illnesses. A meat thermometer should be used to ensure foods are cooked to the appropriate internal temperature:

- 145 degrees for roasts, steaks, and chops of beef, veal, pork, and lamb, followed by 3 minutes of rest time after the meat is removed from the heat source
- 160 degrees for ground beef, veal, pork, and lamb
- 165 degrees for poultry
- Cold foods should be kept cold and hot foods should be kept hot.
- Fruits and vegetables should be washed under running water just before eating, cutting, or cooking. A produce brush can be used under running water to clean fruits and vegetables with firm skin.
- Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices should be kept away from other foods.

## **+ Cleaning Up**

- People should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water before and after handling raw meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, produce, or eggs. People should also wash their hands

after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or touching animals before handling any food.

- Utensils and surfaces should be washed with hot, soapy water before and after they are used to prepare food. Diluted bleach—1 teaspoon of bleach to 1 quart of hot water—can also be used to sanitize utensils and surfaces.

## **During**

The only treatment needed for most foodborne illnesses is replacing lost fluids and electrolytes to prevent dehydration. Remember that infants and children are likely to become dehydrated more quickly from diarrhea and vomiting because of their smaller body size. Older adults and adults with weak immune systems should also drink oral rehydration solutions to prevent dehydration.

Over-the-counter medications may help stop diarrhea in adults. However, people with bloody diarrhea—a sign of bacterial or parasitic infection—should not use these medications. If diarrhea is caused by bacteria or parasites, over-the-counter medications may prolong the problem. Medications to treat diarrhea in adults can be dangerous for infants and children and should only be given with a health care provider's guidance.

## **+ Treat Foodborne Illness**

- Drink plenty of liquids such as fruit juices, sports drinks, caffeine-free soft drinks, and broths to replace fluids and electrolytes.
- Sip small amounts of clear liquids or suck on ice chips if vomiting is a problem.

- Gradually reintroduce food, starting with bland, easy-to-digest foods such as rice, potatoes, toast or bread, cereal, lean meat, applesauce, and bananas.
- Avoid fatty foods, sugary foods, dairy products, caffeine, and alcohol until recovery is complete.

### **+ Infants and Children**

- Provide oral rehydration solutions using water and drinks with electrolytes.
- Give your child food as soon as they are hungry.
- Provide infants with breast milk or full strength formula, as usual, along with oral rehydration solutions.

### **+ Contact Your Physician**

If the specific cause of the foodborne illness is diagnosed, a health care provider may prescribe medications, such as antibiotics, to treat the illness. Hospitalization may be required to treat life threatening symptoms and complications, such as paralysis and severe dehydration.

## **Hazardous Materials Incidents**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Hazardous Materials Incidents**

Chemical and hazardous substances, if released or misused, can pose a threat to you or the environment. Chemicals may include items found around your home or in your garage. Hazardous materials may include substances that are transported on roadways, railways, waterways, and pipelines. Remember that an incident involving chemicals or hazardous

materials can happen in your community through accident or intentional action, such as an act of terrorism.

Many hazardous materials do not have any odor, and may only be detected once physical symptoms like watering eyes or nausea occur. Some hazardous materials can cause death, serious injury, long-lasting health effects, and damage to buildings and property. They can have an immediate effect (a few seconds to a few minutes) or a delayed effect (2 to 48 hours).

### **You may be exposed to Chemicals in three ways:**

- Inhaling the chemical or hazardous material.
- Swallowing contaminated substances, food, water, or medication.
- Touching it or coming into contact with clothing or things that have touched the substance.

Your local fire department or emergency management agency may have additional information on chemical or hazardous materials that might impact your community.

### **Before**

Before a chemical or hazardous materials incident, it is important to know the types of hazards that you may be exposed to in your home and community. Look for hazards that might be in your home as well as those in your community.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a hazardous materials incident occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

### **+ Be Informed**

- Contact your local emergency management office or fire department to understand the types of chemicals or hazardous materials that might impact your community.
- Understand evacuation routes around your home, work, school or the places you frequent. Identify multiple evacuation options in case your first chosen route is not safe.

### **During**

If you are directly exposed to any hazardous substance, dial 9-1-1. In many cases decontamination is needed within minutes of exposure to minimize health consequences. Do not leave the safety of a shelter to go outdoors to help others until authorities announce it is safe to do so. A person affected by a chemical agent requires immediate medical attention from a professional. If materials are available to safely remove a chemical from a person try to help them as much as possible; however, continue to seek help from first responders.

### **+ Get Information**

- Listen to local radio or television stations for detailed information and instructions. Heed all warnings and directions provided by local public safety officials.

### **+ Notify the Authorities**

- If you witness a hazardous materials incident, spill or leak, call 911, your local emergency number or the fire department as soon as possible. Avoid contact with any spilled liquid materials, airborne mist or condensed solid deposit. Move to an upwind location and away from any visible plumes.

### **+ If You are Outside**

- If you are caught outside during an incident, try to stay upstream, uphill and upwind. Hazardous materials can be transported quickly by water and wind.

### **+ If you are in your Vehicle**

- If you are in a vehicle, stop and seek shelter in a permanent building. If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner and heater.

### **+ Protect Yourself and Your Family**

- Keep your body fully covered and wear gloves, socks and shoes even though these measures may offer minimal protection.
- Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may be contaminated.

### **+ Evacuation**

- If you are told to evacuate, do so immediately.
- In general, try to go at least one-half mile (10 city blocks) from the incident area.
- Stay away from the incident area to minimize the risk of contamination.

### **+ Shelter in Place**

- You may be asked to shelter in place if a hazardous materials incident occurs. If advised to do so, close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Close vents, fireplace dampers, and as many interior doors as possible. Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems. In large buildings, set ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building. If this is not possible, ventilation systems should be turned off. Go into a pre-selected shelter room. This room should be above ground and have the fewest openings to the outside. Seal the room by covering each window, door, and vent using plastic sheeting and duct tape. Use material to fill cracks and holes in the room, such as those around pipes.
- If you are requested to stay indoors or shelter-in-place, do so immediately.

#### **+ If You or Someone You Know is Contaminated**

- Act quickly if you have come into contact with or have been exposed to hazardous materials.
- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities. You may be advised to take a thorough shower, or you may be advised to stay away from water and follow another procedure.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms as soon as possible.
- Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers. Do not allow them to contact other materials. Call local authorities to find out about proper disposal.
- Advise everyone who comes into contact with you that you may have been exposed to a hazardous material.

## **After**

After a chemical or hazardous materials incident, it is important to remember that your environment may still contain toxins. Local law enforcement and emergency management professionals will advise you of any actions you may need to take to clean-up your property.

### **+ Return to Your Home**

- Return home only when authorities say it is safe. Open windows and vents and turn on fans to provide ventilation.
- Find out from local authorities how to clean up your land and property.
- Report any lingering vapors or other hazards to your local emergency services office.

## **Nuclear Power Plant Incidents**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Nuclear Power Plant Incidents**

Nuclear power plants use the heat generated from nuclear fission in a contained environment to convert water to steam, which powers generators to produce electricity. Nuclear power plants operate in most states in the country and produce about 20 percent of the nation's power. Nearly 3 million Americans live within 10 miles of an operating nuclear power plant.

### **+ What You Need to Know**

Although the construction and operation of these facilities are closely monitored and regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), accidents and acts of terrorism towards these plants are possible. An

accident could result in dangerous levels of radiation that could affect the health and safety of the public living near the nuclear power plant.

Local and state governments, federal agencies, and the electric utilities have detailed emergency response plans in the event of a nuclear power plant incident. The plans define two “emergency planning zones.” One zone covers an area within a 10-mile radius of the plant, where it is possible that people could be harmed by direct radiation exposure. The second zone covers a broader area, usually up to a 50-mile radius from the plant, where radioactive materials could contaminate water supplies, food crops and livestock.

The potential danger from an accident at a nuclear power plant is exposure to radiation. This exposure could come from the release of radioactive material from the plant into the environment, usually characterized by a plume (cloud-like formation) of radioactive gases and particles. The major hazards to people in the vicinity of the plume are radiation exposure to the body from the cloud and particles deposited on the ground, inhalation of radioactive materials and ingestion of radioactive materials. Prior or during a nuclear power plant incident, you can find detailed information from your local television and radio stations, local emergency management agency, or local Nuclear Power Plant/Energy provider.

### **Before**

If you live within 10 miles of the power plant, you should receive the materials yearly from the power company or your state or local government. Obtain public emergency information materials from the power company that operates your local nuclear power plant or your local emergency services office.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a nuclear power plant incident occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

### **+ Shelter in Place**

- You may be asked to shelter in place. Identify a location in your building that is safe to shelter in. This should be an above-ground room that has the fewest openings to the outside.

### **During**

If an accident at a nuclear power plant were to release radiation in your area, local authorities would activate warning sirens or another approved alert method. They also would instruct you through local television and radio stations on how to protect yourself. Follow all instructions closely, including the safest way to evacuate, if instructed to do so.

### **+ Evacuate**

- If you are told to evacuate, keep car windows and vents closed; use re-circulating air.
- Go to a designated public shelter if you have been told to evacuate or you feel it is unsafe to remain in your home. Text **SHELTER +** your ZIP code to **43362** (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your

area (example: **shelter 12345**). Additionally, you can contact your local chapter of the American Red Cross or your local Emergency Management Agency.

### + Shelter in Place

- If you are advised to remain indoors, turn off the air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace and other air intakes.
- Shield yourself by placing heavy, dense material between you and the radiation source. Go to your shelter in place location, or a below-ground location.
- Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.

### + If You are at Work

- If your workplace is out of the incident zone, stay away until local officials instruct that it is safe to return. Most radiation loses its strength fairly quickly.

### After

If an incident happens at a nuclear power plant, local officials will provide you with information on steps to take and how to stay safe. This includes recommendations for whether or not you may need to seek medical attention.

### + Decontamination

- If you are exposed to radiation, follow decontamination instructions from local authorities. You may be advised to take a thorough shower.
- Change exposed clothes and shoes; put exposed clothing in a plastic bag; seal it and place it out of the way.

- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms, such as nausea, as soon as possible.
- Keep food in covered containers or in the refrigerator. Food not previously covered should be washed before being put in to containers.

## **Pandemic Influenza**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Pandemic Influenza**

An influenza (flu) pandemic is a global outbreak of a new version of the flu virus that can spread easily from person to person. Like the seasonal flu many people experience every year, pandemic flu will probably spread by infected people coughing or sneezing and by touching an infected surface. Unlike seasonal flu, people will have little immunity to the new flu virus that causes a pandemic, and many more people will get sick.

## **+ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Recommendations Health Guidelines**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people, and avoid crowded places or venues.

- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid contact with others until your temperature returns to normal for more than 24 hours without the assistance of fever reducing pharmaceuticals.

Additional information about pandemic influenza can be found on the CDC website or from your local public health department. During an outbreak, local TV, radio and your local emergency management agency can provide additional information.

### **Before**

It is likely that you will know that a pandemic is occurring due to the nature of the spread of the disease. Because a pandemic is spread from person to person, it is important to have supplies around your home in case you need to isolate yourself from the population. In addition, actions taken to prevent regular flu can help you prevent contracting a pandemic flu.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a pandemic influenza occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

### **+ Additional Supplies**

- Increase your emergency supply of food and water from three days to two weeks. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand.
- Periodically check medication taken on a regular basis to make sure you have extra supplies in your home.
- Have nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.

#### **+ Seek Medical Advice and Treatment**

- Contact your doctor to find out the best way to avoid the flu.
- Get a yearly flu vaccination, especially if you are at high risk for flu complications.
- Discuss individual health concerns with your doctor.

#### **+ Stay Healthy**

- Practice good hygiene and wash your hands frequently.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Regularly clean surfaces that are touched by multiple people.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise and getting enough rest.

#### **During**

If a flu pandemic occurs, it will likely be a prolonged and widespread outbreak over a period of several months that could require temporary changes in many parts of everyday life, including school, work, transportation and other public services. During an outbreak, hospitals

and doctors may be overwhelmed with sick patients, schools and business may choose to close, and public health officials may suggest isolation or quarantine to control the spread of the infection.

In the event of a pandemic flu outbreak, the best strategy will be to practice good hygiene to protect yourself from becoming sick and from transmitting the disease to others if you do become sick.

### **+ Stay Healthy**

- Practice good hygiene and wash your hands frequently.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Regularly clean surfaces that are touched by multiple people.

### **+ Stay Home**

- Stay home from work or school when you are sick.
- Avoid crowded locations and social gatherings to protect yourself from the getting the flu.

## **Radiological Attack**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Radiological Attack**

A radiological attack is the spreading of radioactive material with the intent to do harm. Radioactive materials are used every day in laboratories, medical centers, food irradiation plants, and for industrial uses. If stolen or otherwise acquired, many of these materials could be used in a Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD).

### **+ Radiological Dispersal Devices versus Dirty Bombs**

A “dirty bomb” is one type of RDD that uses a conventional explosion to disperse radioactive material over a targeted area. The term dirty bomb and RDD are often used interchangeably in technical literature. However, RDDs could also include other means of dispersal such as placing a container of radioactive material in a public place, or using an airplane to disperse powdered or aerosolized forms of radioactive material.

### **+ Dirty Bomb versus Nuclear Bomb**

A nuclear bomb creates an explosion that is thousands to millions of times more powerful than any conventional explosive that might be used in a dirty bomb. The resulting mushroom cloud from a nuclear detonation contains fine particles of radioactive dust and other debris that can blanket large areas (tens to hundreds of square miles) with “fallout.” By contrast, most of the radioactive particles dispersed by a dirty bomb would likely fall to the ground within a few city blocks or miles of the explosion.

### **+ Health Effects of Radiation Exposure**

Most injuries from a dirty bomb would probably occur from the heat, debris, radiological dust, and force of the conventional explosion used to disperse the radioactive material, affecting only individuals close to the site of the explosion. At the low radiation levels expected from an RDD, the immediate health effects from radiation exposure would likely be minimal. Health effects of radiation exposure are determined by the amount of radiation absorbed by the body, radiation type, means of exposure—external or internal (absorbed by the skin, inhaled, or ingested), and length of time exposed.

The health effects of radiation tend to be directly proportional to radiation dose. If a reasonable estimate can be made of a person’s dose, a lot is known about the health effects at that dose.

Detailed information on your local television and radio stations, your local government's emergency management website, Federal government websites like the Federal Bureau of Investigation and their social media outlets like Twitter and Facebook.

## **Before**

Prepare for a radiological attack by knowing the best method to protect yourself and your family during an attack is to use time, distance, and shielding. Following any radiological explosion, you should:

- Minimize the time you are exposed to the radiation materials from the dirty bomb.
- Maximize your distance from the source; walking even a short distance from the scene could provide significant protection since dose rate drops dramatically with distance from the source.
- Shield yourself from external exposure and inhalation of radioactive material.

## **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

- 1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a radiological attack occur.
- 2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.
- 3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

## **+ Shelter in Place**

Taking shelter during an RDD event is absolutely necessary. There are two kinds of shelters - blast and fallout. The following describes the two kinds of shelters:

- Blast shelters are specifically constructed to offer some protection against blast pressure, initial radiation, heat, and fire. But even a blast shelter cannot withstand a direct hit from a nuclear explosion.
- Fallout shelters do not need to be specially constructed for protecting against fallout. They can be any protected space, provided that the walls and roof are thick and dense enough to absorb the radiation given off by fallout particles.

Find out from officials if any public buildings in your community have been designated as fallout shelters. If none have been designated, make your own list of potential shelters near your home, workplace, and school. These places would include basements or the windowless center area of middle floors in high-rise buildings, as well as subways and tunnels.

If you live in an apartment building or high-rise, talk to the manager about the safest place in the building for sheltering and about plans to provide for building occupants until it is safe to go out.

## **+ Evacuation**

Evacuation as a plume is passing could result in greater exposures than sheltering in place. The best course of action will be provided by emergency officials.

### **During**

If you are outside when a radiological attack occurs, cover your nose and mouth and get into a nearby building. It is important to minimize the time you are exposed but increase the distance and to shield yourself from potential exposure.

## **+ In Your Home**

- If you are inside, check your building for damage and find better shelter if necessary.
- Close windows and doors and turn off all heating, cooling and ventilation systems.
- Stay put and stay informed through TV or local radio.
- Shield yourself with a thick piece of material between you and any radioactive materials.

## **+ If You are Exposed to Radiation**

- Stay away from any obvious plume or dust cloud.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, filter, or damp cloth to avoid inhaling or ingesting the radioactive material.
- Walk inside a building with closed doors and windows as quickly as can be done in an orderly manner and listen for information from emergency responders and authorities.
- Remove contaminated clothes as soon as possible; place them in a sealed container such as a plastic bag. The clothing could be used later to estimate your exposure.
- Gently wash skin to remove possible contamination; make sure that no radioactive material enters the mouth or is transferred to areas of the face where it could be easily moved to the mouth and ingested. For example, don't eat, drink, or smoke before removing the contamination.

## **After**

After a radiological incident, remember that if you are exposed you can expose or contaminate other people with whom you come in close

contact. Avoid contact with others until you (or they) are decontaminated. Seek medical attention after officials indicate it is safe to leave your location, especially if you have inhaled or ingested radioactive material. Do not return or visit the incident location for any reason until local officials have declared that it is safe.

### **+ Affected Areas**

In the days and weeks following the use of an RDD, officials might be expected to:

- Establish a plan for careful monitoring and assessment of affected areas.
- Impose quarantines as necessary to prevent further exposures.
- Remove contamination from areas where persons might continue to be exposed.

### **+ Long-Term Consequences**

- One concern of radiation exposure is an elevated risk of developing cancer later in life. A long-term medical surveillance program might be established for victims of a significant radiological attack to monitor potential health effects.

## **School and Workplace Violence**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **School and Workplace Violence**

A violent incident can occur at your work or school under a variety of circumstances, so no one set of guidelines is able to cover specific

actions to take in every situation. Even so, familiarity with the following information can help with planning your own survival strategy in a variety of circumstances. School and workplace violence may take the form of an active shooter. An active shooter is a person who is using a firearm or other weapon with the intent to injure or kill others. Law enforcement personnel will deploy to the location of the active shooter with the primary goal of stopping the shooter.

During an emergency at your school or workplace resulting from violence or any other type of emergency, you may receive information via automated text alerts or phone messages, over a public announcement system or police radio speakers. If you have phone service or internet, you can try to pass on and receive real time information through 9-1-1.

### **Before**

Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Escape (ALICE) is a principle you, your family, and your workplace can utilize in order to increase your chances of surviving violence at your school or workplace. It is important to remember that the "ALICE" principle is not a fixed set of actions you have to take when confronted with an incident - you can decide the appropriate actions to take and tailor the steps based on the situation you find yourself in.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should an act of violence occur in school or in the workplace.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

## **+ ALICE**

**Alert-** Can be anything that catches your attention, including gunfire, PA announcements, or alerts via your phone or text.

**Lockdown-** This is a semi-secure starting point from which you will make survival decisions. If you decide not to evacuate, secure the room by locking and barricading the door. Look for alternate escape routes, and call 911. Move away from the doorway and place phones on silent. Once the door is secure, do not open it for anyone and prepare to defend yourself and others should an assailant come into the room.

**Inform-** Using any means necessary to pass on real time information. Provide information in plain language, including important items like who, what, where, when and why.

**Counter-** This is the use of simple, proactive techniques should you be confronted by an armed assailant or threatening situation. Know that anything can be a weapon, and throwing items can distract the person or their aim. If necessary, attack in a group and grab the individual's limbs and head to hold them to the ground. Noise in the room can also distract an assailant. If you have control of the attacker, call 911 and tell the police your location.

**Escape-** Remove yourself from the danger zone as quickly as possible. If you can evacuate by window, break out the glass and clear as much glass as possible from the frame. Consider using belts or other items as improvised rope. If you can evacuate, run in a zigzag pattern as fast as you can and do not stop running until you are far away from the area.

Contact 911 as soon as you are in a safe location to let them know of the situation.

## **During**

If a violent act happens at your school or place of work, specifically one that involves an active shooter, it is important to know how to stay safe.

### **+ If the Threat is Outside Your Building**

- Proceed to a room that can be locked. On your way to the room, tell as many people as possible to do the same.
- Lock all doors and windows and turn off the lights.
- Have one person in the room call 911 and be prepared to advise the dispatcher of your location, name, the number of people in the room with you, any and all information about the person's actions and location.
- Remain in the room until advised by law enforcement personnel to exit the building. Do not respond to unidentified or unrecognized voice commands or fire alarms.
- Officers will enter your building and check each room. If you have not been contacted within one hour, call 911 for further instructions.

### **+ When the Threat is Inside Your Building**

- Determine if the room you are in or near can be locked or otherwise secured. If so, follow the procedures as indicated above.
- If the room can't be locked or secured, locate the nearest exit and determine whether or not you can exit the building safely.
- If you can safely leave the building, do so.

### **+ When the Threat is in Your Office or Classroom**

- Try to remain calm and call 911 if possible. If you are unable to speak, leave the phone line open so that the dispatcher can hear what is taking place.
- If you cannot escape or hide, you may try to negotiate with the person, pretend to be unconscious, or fight and attempt to overpower the person with force, as a last result.
- Police officers responding to an active shooter may be wearing regular uniforms or special tactical gear, but they will be clearly identified as law enforcement officers.
- Responding officers will point firearms at you while seeking the threat. This is a normal part of their training and response. Avoid any sudden furtive movements and obey all officer commands. Keep your hands visible to officers at all times.
- Responding officers are trained to proceed immediately to the area where shooting is taking place to neutralize the threat. If you are injured, they will not stop to assist you.
- Another group of officers and/or tactical medics will follow to provide medical assistance and help with evacuation.
- Remain calm and immediately comply with all commands from law enforcement officers.

### **After**

Once you have escaped to a safe location, keep in mind that the entire building, whether a school or workplace, is still a crime scene. Police and emergency personnel will typically not let anyone leave until the situation is fully under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Remain at whatever assembly point authorities designate until you are released. Always obey the commands of law enforcement during an active shooter or workplace violence event.

## **Terrorist Attacks**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Terrorist Attacks**

Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence by a person or group. The goal is to intimidate or coerce societies or governments in an effort to promote political or ideological beliefs. These attacks can take many forms, and could happen at any time in any place. Terrorists typically exploit vulnerabilities, and may use technology, hazardous materials, biological agents or other methods to create devastating disruptions to the community. Terrorism thrives on fear. By planning how to respond to a terrorist attack, you can greatly improve your chances of survival. You can also lessen the impact of the attack by reducing the fear in the aftermath.

### **+ What You Need to Know**

The United States Department of Homeland Security recommends that individuals be aware of their surroundings and report suspicious activities by calling 911 if a situation seems uncomfortable or does not seem right, move or leave the location. Take precautions when traveling. Do not accept packages from strangers and do not leave luggage unattended. You should promptly report unusual behavior, suspicious or unattended packages, and strange devices to the police or security personnel. Learn where emergency exits are located in buildings you frequent. Plan how to get out in the event of an emergency. Also, be prepared to do without services you normally depend on—electricity, telephone, natural gas, gasoline pumps, cash registers, ATMs, and Internet transactions.

For more information visit: [If You See Something, Say Something](#)

## **Terms Associated with Terrorism**

### **+ Biological Threat**

The deliberate release of germs or other harmful substances that can cause illness.

### **+ Chemical Attack**

The deliberate release of toxic gases, liquids, or solids that can poison people and the environment.

### **+ Radiation**

The spread of harmful radiation through an explosion such as a "dirty bomb."

### **+ Nuclear Blast**

The deliberate detonation of a nuclear device resulting in intense light, heat, radiation, and collateral damage.

### **+ Explosions**

The use of explosions to cause mortal injury or destruction of property. This may include use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or homemade bombs.

In case of a terrorist attack, you can find detailed information from local public safety agencies, and your local TV and radio stations. Also, contact your local police department or local emergency management agency for preparedness information or visit the Department of Homeland Security by visiting: [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).

## **Before**

Some actions can be taken prior to a terrorist incident to prepare you and your family. This may include informing yourself about the risks that might impact your community and planning for how you may respond.

## **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a terrorist attack occur.

2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

## **+ Bomb Threat**

If you receive a telephoned bomb threat, you should get as much information as possible. Try asking the following questions:

- When is the bomb going to explode?
- Where is it right now?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will cause it to explode?
- Did you place the bomb?

Try to keep the caller on the line and record everything that is said. Notify the police and building management immediately. If the threat seems credible, evacuate the building immediately.

## **+ Suspicious Packages and Letters**

Be wary of suspicious packages and letters. They can contain explosives, chemical or biological agents. Be particularly cautious at your place of employment. Some typical characteristics of suspicious packages may include:

- Unexpected or unfamiliar senders.
- No return address or a return address that can't be verified as legitimate.
- Marked with restrictive endorsements such as "Personal," "Confidential," or "Do not X-ray."
- Have protruding wires or aluminum foil, strange odors or stains.
- Show a city or state in the postmark that doesn't match the return address.
- Are of unusual weight given their size or are lopsided or oddly shaped.
- Are marked with threatening language.
- Have inappropriate or unusual labeling.
- Have excessive postage or packaging material, such as masking tape and string.
- Have misspellings of common words.
- Are addressed to someone no longer with your organization or are otherwise outdated.
- Have incorrect titles or titles without a name.
- Are not addressed to a specific person.
- Have hand-written or poorly typed addresses.

## **During**

If a terrorist attack occurs, it is important that you remain calm and follow instructions from local officials and emergency service personnel. You should be aware of your surroundings and watch for additional attacks. Listen to local TV and radio for directions and travel information and instructions from local officials. If you are in a position where the attack occurs near you, check for injuries and provide first-aid.

### **+ In Your Home**

- If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact—do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency. In some cases, cell phones will not work. Consider texting or other ways of communicating.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

### **+ If There is an Explosion**

- Call 9-1-1
- Get under a sturdy table or desk if things are falling around you. When they stop falling, leave quickly, watching for obviously weakened floors and stairways. As you exit from the building, be especially watchful of falling debris.

- Leave the building as quickly as possible. Crawl low to the floor if there is smoke. Do not stop to retrieve personal possessions or make phone calls.
- Do not use elevators.
- Check for fire and other hazards.
- Once you are out, do not stand in front of windows, glass doors or other potentially hazardous areas.
- Move away from sidewalks or streets to be used by emergency officials or others still exiting the building.
- If you are trapped in debris:
  - Use a flashlight, if possible, to signal your location to rescuers.
  - Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear where you are.
  - If possible, use a whistle to signal rescuers.
  - Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.
  - Avoid unnecessary movement so you don't kick up dust.
- Cover your nose and mouth with anything you have on hand. (Dense-weave cotton material can act as a good filter. Try to breathe through the material.)

## **After**

After a terrorist attack, expect heavy law enforcement involvement at the local, state and federal levels. These agencies will investigate the incident and the location will be treated as a crime scene. Your workplace or school may be closed, and there may be restrictions on domestic and international travel. You and your family may have to

evacuate the area, as instructed by local law enforcement officials. Further, expect extensive media coverage and increased law enforcement presence, even if the attack did not occur in your community.

## **Thunder Storms**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Thunder Storms**

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012, an early morning thunderstorm hit downtown Chicago and parts of Northwest Indiana, toppling trees and downing power lines. The storm moved through Lake, DuPage, DeKalb, Kane and Kendall counties and the National Weather Service reported the line of storms to be capable of winds in excess of 70 mph. After the storm, 47,000 people in Illinois and 19,000 people in Indiana were without power.

Thunderstorms can be destructive and extremely dangerous weather emergencies. Thunderstorms bring high winds, heavy rains and dangerous lightning, one of the leading causes of weather-related deaths in the United States each year. Being prepared in advance — and ready to act quickly — will help ensure your safety in the event that one of these weather emergencies occurs.

### **+ What you need to know**

Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which means every thunderstorm is dangerous. Because lightning is so unpredictable and can occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall, being prepared and knowing what to do in a thunderstorm will decrease your risk of being injured. Other dangers associated with thunderstorms include tornadoes, strong winds, hail and flash flooding, which is responsible for more fatalities than any other thunderstorm-associated hazard.

- Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months during the afternoon and evening, so be particularly cautious of lightning at that time of year. If you see lightning you should seek shelter.

## **Know the difference between a Thunderstorm Watch and a Thunderstorm Warning:**

### **+ Thunderstorm Watch**

There is a possibility of a thunderstorm in your area.

### **+ Thunderstorm Warning**

A thunderstorm is occurring or will likely occur soon. If you are advised to take shelter, do so immediately.

## **Before**

You can find detailed information on your local TV and radio, the National Weather Service, your local government's emergency management website, and social media like NOAA's twitter and NOAA's Facebook.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1- Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a severe thunderstorm occur.

2- Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 -Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

### **+ Actions before a thunderstorm occurs:**

- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.
- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Shutter windows and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close window blinds, shades or curtains.
- If a thunderstorm is likely in your area, postpone outdoor activities.

## **During**

### **+ Actions to take during a thunderstorm:**

- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Avoid the following:
  - Natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
  - Hilltops, open fields, the beach or a boat on the water.
  - Isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
  - Anything metal, such as tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs and bicycles.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.

- Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.
- Listen for weather updates from local officials.

**+ If you are outdoors during a thunderstorm:**

- In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. Avoid the tallest trees.
- In an open area, go to a low place like a ravine or valley, but watch for flooding.
- On open water, get to land and find shelter immediately.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, a lightning strike is about to happen:
  - Squat low but don't lie down.
  - Place your hands over your ears and head between your knees.
  - Make yourself the smallest possible target.

**After**

**+ Actions after a thunderstorm:**

- Assess your immediate environment
- Report fallen trees, flooded streets, or damaged public utilities to the proper department
- Stay tuned to local weather stations for updated information

## **Tornadoes**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Tornadoes**

Tornadoes, nature's most violent storms, can appear suddenly and without warning — even remaining invisible until dust and debris are picked up or a funnel cloud appears. These violent storms can pack winds of up to 300 mph and leave damage trails up to 1 mile wide and 50 miles long.

In our region, Illinois ranks fifth in the nation for the most tornadoes per 10,000 square miles, the majority of the tornadoes occurred between April 1 and June 30 and between the hours of 3 p.m. and 10 p.m. However, tornadoes have occurred every month of the year at all hours of the day. Nearly 30% of all tornadoes occur after dark. But it's not just Illinois that is at risk of tornadoes, Indiana ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation. Lastly, in 2011 Wisconsin experienced a tornado outbreak which was the largest April event on record as well as one of the largest single-day events during the course of any year, 16 tornadoes touched down!

### **+ What you need to know**

Tornadoes vary greatly in their appearance and can occur with little or no warning. It is important to know the signs that a tornado could be imminent:

- A dark, often greenish sky
- A wall cloud, particularly if it is rotating
- Large hail, which is often produced by the same storms that produce tornadoes
- A loud roar, similar to the sound of a freight train
- Tornadoes may occur and be visible near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm

- Tornadoes may also be embedded in rain and not visible

### **During a tornado watch:**

- Stay tuned to local radio and TV stations or the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio for further weather information.
- Watch the weather and be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.

### **During a tornado warning:**

- A tornado warning is issued when a tornado funnel is sighted or indicated by weather radar. You should take shelter immediately.
- With tornadoes, planning and practicing specifically how and where you take shelter is a matter of survival. Know the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning:

#### **+ Tornado Watch**

Conditions are favorable for tornadoes in and close to the watch area.

#### **+ Tornado Warning**

A tornado has been detected by Doppler Radar and/or has been sighted.

### **Before**

You can find detailed information on your local TV and radio, the National Weather Service, your local government's emergency management website, and social media like NOAA's twitter and NOAA's Facebook.

#### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

1- Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on

critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a tornado occur.

2- Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.

3 -Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

**+ Protect yourself and your family before a tornado:**

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or other broadcast news for the latest information
- Look for approaching storms on the horizon
- Be aware of the danger signs:
  - Dark, often greenish sky
  - Large hail
  - A large, dark rotating cloud (funnel-shaped)
  - Loud roar, similar to a freight train
  - Locate the safest place to take shelter
- Determine a place where you will take shelter in case of a tornado warning. Storm cellars or basements provide the best protection.

**During**

During a tornado, remember what is in your family emergency plan if you are at home. If you are at the office, school, or in a store, follow the instructions given to you that will help keep you safe.

- If underground shelter is not available, go into an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
- Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Go to the center of the room. Stay away from corners because they attract debris.

- If you're not in your home, seek shelter in the basement or an interior room of a nearby, sturdy building. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, leave it immediately.
- Schools should have a designated shelter area (usually an interior hallway on the lowest floor). Stay out of auditoriums, gymnasiums and other structures with wide, free span roofs.

**+ If You Are Inside a Vehicle, Trailer or Mobile Home:**

- Get out right away and go to the lowest floor of a nearby building or storm shelter.
- Do not stay in a mobile home. They offer little protection, even if they are tied down.
- Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas. Leave the vehicle and seek shelter right away.

**+ If You Are Outside with No Shelter:**

- Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression. Know if your location could flood quickly.
- Do not go under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Watch out for flying debris. This is how most fatalities and injuries occur.

**After**

After a tornado, reunite with your family members at your pre-designated meeting location. Remember to be extremely careful of where you walk – broken glass, nails, and power lines can all cause injury after a tornado.

**+ More tips:**

- Continue listening to local radio or television stations and your NOAA Weather Radio for updated information.
- Review your Family Emergency Plan and contact your emergency points of contact.
  - If all of your family members are not present, report to your family's pre-designated meeting point, unless emergency officials direct otherwise.
- Assess any damage to your home or immediate surroundings.
  - Be aware of any potential hazards such as ruptured gas lines, structural damage to your home, downed electrical lines, and localized flooding. Immediately report any injuries or hazards via 9-1-1. Advise your family and neighbors as well.
- Call 9-1-1 to report injured or trapped persons.
  - Give first aid where appropriate, but do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger. Never enter any building that appears to have suffered structural damage or that poses any other hazards.
- Do not enter any disaster area.
  - Your presence there will simply add to the confusion and may hamper emergency response efforts. A public message will be broadcast in the event that volunteers are needed.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
  - Once you have notified your pre-identified emergency contact person that you are okay, let him or her notify other family or loved ones. Telephones are frequently overwhelmed in a

disaster situation and need to be clear for emergency calls to get through.

## **Winter Storms**

Disasters can happen... at any time. Be prepared to take action before, during and after.

## **Winter Storms**

The National Weather Service refers to winter storms as the "Deceptive Killers" because most deaths are indirectly related to the storm. People are injured or killed in traffic accidents on icy roads, or suffer from hypothermia due to prolonged exposure to the cold. Winter storms can knock out heat, power and communications, sometimes for days at a time.

Winter storms include a variety of weather, including snow or subfreezing temperatures, strong winds and even ice or heavy rain storms. Detailed information on winter storms can be found by contacting the National Weather Service Forecast Office, your local emergency management agency, or by monitoring local TV, radio, and NOAA weather radio.

### **There are different terms used to refer to winter storms:**

<b>Winter Storm Watch</b>	A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for more information.
<b>Winter Storm Warning</b>	A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.

<b>Blizzard Warning</b>	Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow, reducing visibility, are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.
<b>Frost/Freeze Warning</b>	Below freezing temperatures are expected.
<b>Freezing Rain</b>	Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees, and power lines.
<b>Sleet</b>	Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.
<b>Flurries</b>	Light snow falling for short durations. No accumulation or light dusting is all that is expected.
<b>Showers</b>	Snow falling at varying intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.
<b>Squalls</b>	Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant.
<b>Blowing</b>	Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility and

<b>Snow</b>	causes significant drifting. Blowing snow may be snow that is falling and/or loose snow on the ground picked up by the wind.
<b>Blizzard</b>	Winds over 35 mph with snow and blowing snow reducing visibility to near zero.

## **Before**

Before winter approaches, add supplies to your emergency kit to prepare for the weather. This may include rock salt to melt ice on walkways, sand to improve traction, snow shovels and other snow removal equipment. Make sure you have adequate clothing and blankets to keep you and your family warm. Consider purchasing a generator to use in the event of prolonged power outages.

### **+ Three Steps to Be Ready**

- 1 – Complete the Family Emergency Plan and discuss it as a family. This is a simple way of keeping each member of the family informed on critical information: where to reconnect should you become separated, who to call, and what you will do should a winter storm occur.
- 2 – Complete the Emergency Contacts Card and place one in your Emergency Kit.
- 3 – Prepare an Emergency Kit. The Emergency Kit should be easily accessible should you and your family be forced to shelter in place (stay at home) for a period of time.

### **+ Prepare Your Home**

- Have your heating system checked by a professional annually. This will ensure that your system is working safely and efficiently which, in turn, will save you money.
- If you heat by wood, clean your fireplace or stove. Have your chimney flue checked for any buildup of creosote and then cleaned to lessen the risk of fire.
- Make sure your home is well insulated and that you have weather stripping around your doors and windowsills to keep the warm air inside.
- Close off unneeded rooms, stuff towels or rags in the cracks under doors and cover windows at night.
- Use extreme caution when using alternative heating sources. Refuel kerosene heaters outside keep them at least three feet from flammable objects. When using kerosene heaters, be sure to maintain ventilation to avoid build-up of toxic fumes.
- To keep pipes from freezing wrap pipes in insulation, heat tape or layers of old newspapers. Cover the newspapers with plastic to keep out moisture and let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing.
- Learn how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts. If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or layers of newspapers and wrap pipes in rags.
- Disconnect garden hoses and shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house.

### **+ In Your Car**

- Plan ahead for winter travel. Be sure to let someone know where you are going, along with your primary and alternate routes.

- Prepare your vehicle for winter by checking, or having your mechanic check your car. This includes antifreeze levels, battery and ignition systems, breaks, exhaust systems, fuel and air filters, lights, oil, and windshield wipers and fluid.

## **During**

During severe winter weather, stay indoors to the greatest extent possible. If you have to leave your house, plan ahead and make sure you have emergency supplies in your car, including warm clothing in case your car is stuck.

## **+ Protect Your Family**

- Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat. Wear gloves (or mittens) and a hat to help prevent loss of body heat.
- Stay indoors during storms.
- Check on elderly relatives or neighbors who may need additional assistance to ensure their safety.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy, walkways.
- Use caution not to over exert yourself when shoveling snow.
- Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Keep dry. If possible, change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.

## **+ Signs of Frostbite**

- Signs of frostbite include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the

tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.

### **+ Signs of Hypothermia**

- Signs of hypothermia include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the individual to a warm location, remove any damp or wet clothing, and put the person in dry clothing and wrap their entire body in a blanket. It is important to warm the center of the body first. If the person is conscious, give them warm, non-alcoholic or non-caffeinated beverages. Seek medical help as soon as possible.

### **+ In Your Home**

- Avoid driving during winter storms. If you must drive, stay on main roads and avoid back road shortcuts. Try to travel only during the day.
- If you will be going away during cold weather, leave the heat on in your home, set to a temperature no lower than 55°F.

### **+ In Your Car**

- Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping your residence cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.
- Plan ahead for winter travel. Be sure to let someone know where you are going, along with your primary and alternate routes.
- If you get trapped in your car during a blizzard, pull off the highway. Turn on hazard lights and hang a distress flag from your antenna or window.

- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you. Do not set out on foot during a blizzard unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter. If you do leave the vehicle, use extra caution because distances are distorted by blowing snow.
- Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm. When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe to guard against possible carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Huddle with other passengers and use your coat for a blanket.
- Take turns sleeping. One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.
- Be careful not to waste battery power. Balance electrical energy needs (use of lights, heat, radio) with supply.
- If stranded in a remote area, stomp large block letters in an open area spelling out HELP or SOS and line with rocks or tree limbs to attract the attention of rescue personnel who may be surveying the area by airplane.

## **After**

After the danger from a winter storm passes, or when roads are cleared, seek out additional ways to stay warm. This may include going to a shelter or warming center if your home is not warm. Avoid walking outside on slippery or hilly surfaces until ice has melted. Use caution, as snow and ice can melt during the day and re-freeze as temperatures drop in the evening.

## **+ Stay Warm**

- Go to a designated public shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold. Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your area or contact your local American Red Cross Chapter or Emergency Management Agency.
- Continue to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia by wearing warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in several layers. Stay indoors, if possible.
- If you've lost power, use battery-powered flashlights rather than candles or other open flames for light. Many injuries and deaths result from accidental fires caused by candles during winter storms.

## **Contacts**

EACH MUNICIPALITY AND CITY MAY HAVE ITS OWN LOCAL CONTACTS, FIND YOUR COUNTY BELOW AND CALL WITH ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

Contact us at [info@gearupgetready.org](mailto:info@gearupgetready.org)

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