

Disaster Supply Kit

Why talk about a Disaster Supply Kit?

After a disaster, local officials and relief workers will be on the scene, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours, or it may take days. Basic services, such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment and telephones may be cut off for days or even weeks. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take only essentials with you. You probably will not have the opportunity to shop or search for the supplies you will need. A Disaster Supply Kit can help your family stay safe and be more comfortable after a disaster.

What is a Disaster Supply Kit?

A Disaster Supply Kit is a collection of basic items that members of a household would probably need in the event of a disaster. The items are stored in a portable container(s) near, or as close as possible to, the exit door. Every household should assemble a Disaster Supply Kit and keep it up to date. The number of people in a household and their ages and abilities will determine how many containers will be required to carry the kit items.

You should assemble and maintain a portable Disaster Supply Kit that you can use at home or can take with you if you must evacuate. In addition, if you have a vehicle, you should always keep it stocked with basic emergency supplies.

In a disaster situation, you may need access to your Disaster Supplies Kit quickly – whether you are sheltering at home or evacuating. Store the items in sturdy, clearly labeled, easy-to-carry containers near the door, if possible. Duffle bags, backpacks, and covered trash receptacles are good candidates for containers. In addition to a three to seven-day supply of food and water in your Disaster Supply Kit, you should consider maintaining a two-week supply of food and water in your home.

Assemble the following items for use at home or in case you must evacuate:

- Food: 3 – 7 day supply in the kit and 2-week supply in your house.
- Water: 3 – 7 gallons per person in the kit and an additional 4 gallons per person in your home.
- Portable, battery-powered radio and fresh batteries or hand crank AM/FM radio.
- Portable charger or solar charger for cell phones, laptops, iPads.
- Watch or clock with alarm.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit.

- Medications – prescription and non-prescription and other medical necessities (walker, oxygen, etc.).
- Cash and coins.
- Copies of personal identification, medical prescriptions, insurance policies, bank information and credit cards.
- Extra set of car keys and house keys.
- Waterproof matches.
- Map of the area marked with places you could go and their telephone numbers.
- Items for infants, such as formula, diapers, bottles, pacifiers, powdered milk and medications.
- Special items, such as denture needs, contact lenses and supplies, extra eyeglasses and hearing aid batteries.
- Items for seniors, disabled persons or anyone with serious allergies.
- Kitchen accessories: manual can opener; mess kits or disposable cups, plates and utensils; utility knife; sugar and salt; aluminum foil and plastic wrap; reseal able plastic bags.
- Household liquid bleach and/or water filtration systems and iodine tablets.
- For each person, one complete change of clothing and footwear, including sturdy work shoes or boots, raingear, and other items adjusted for the season, such as hat and gloves, thermal underwear, sunglasses, dust mask. Include wet weather gear.
- Blankets or sleeping bag or space blankets for each person.
- Small tent, camping gear (mess kit, stove, fuel, air mattress) compass, small shovel, utility or pocket knife, multi-tool, gloves, mask, safety glasses, ear plugs, insect repellent.
- Paper, clipboard, pencils; needles, thread; small A-B-C type fire extinguisher; medicine dropper; whistle.
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items: toilet paper, paper towels, woolite, towelettes, soap, hand sanitizer, liquid detergent, feminine supplies, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, comb and brush, lip balm, sunscreen, plastic garbage bags (heavy-duty) and ties (for personal sanitation uses), medium-sized plastic bucket with tight lid, disinfectant, household chlorine bleach.
- Entertainment, such as games and books. Favorite comfort dolls, stuffed animals for small children.

Store in your handheld devices and/or phones

- Contact information for family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.
- Contact information for insurance, medical, roadside services.
- Manuals for your gear: radios, generators, chainsaws, etc.
- Apps: first aid, pet first aid, emergency alerts, repeater directory and band plan for your Ham Radios.
- Local and county emergency numbers
- Regular and emergency veterinary numbers and boarding facilities.

Tips for Preparing Your Disaster Supply Kit

- Keep items in separate airtight plastic bags. This will help protect them from damage or spoiling.
- Observe the expiration or “use by” date on stored food and water. If you have prepared your own containers of water, replace them every 6 months to ensure freshness.
- Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update medicines, clothes, etc.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications. You may find that the best solution is to gradually acquire a reserve by refilling prescriptions a little early, but always using those on hand first to avoid having the expiration dates lapse. Be sure they are stored to meet instructions on the label. It may be difficult to obtain prescription medications during a disaster because stores may be closed or supplies may be limited. Keep copies of essential prescriptions with you at all times.
- Use easy-to-carry containers for the supplies you would most likely need for an evacuation. Label them clearly. Think about using:
 - Large trash container with handles and a cover
 - Camping backpack
 - Duffel bag
 - Cargo container that fits on the roof of your vehicle
 - Insulate cooler that protects stored items in hot climates
- Store water separately to prevent damage from leakage.
- Always keep your cell phone with you. Do not pack it in the kit. Consider getting an extra cell phone battery to keep with your Disaster Supply Kit.

Disaster Supply Checklist for Pets

- Medications and medical records stored in a waterproof container and a first aid kit. A pet first aid book or app for your phone is good to have on hand.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, muzzle if needed, jackets and carriers to transport pets safely. Make sure the carrier is large enough to be comfortable if your pet has to stay in it for a long period of time while you have taken shelter away from home.
- Provide comfort items in the carrier, such as blankets, towels or special toys.
- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them in case you and your pets become separated and to prove that they are yours. Have your pets microchipped for easy identification. Have proof of vaccinations. Have ID information on your pet’s collar.
- Food and water for at least 3 - 7 days for each pet, bowls and a manual can opener.
- Cat litter, litter box and scoop.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems and the name and telephone number of your veterinarian.
- Other useful items include newspapers, paper towels, pee pads, poop bags, bleach, plastic trash bags and grooming items.