

# IT'S A DISASTER!

...and what are YOU  
gonna do about it?

5th Edition

A Disaster Preparedness, Prevention  
& Basic First Aid Manual

by Bill & Janet Liebsch



We wanted to share some creative ideas associated with our customizable book that may benefit you and your community.

Fedhealth's products are perfect **Public-Private Partnership** tools. *(Note: This PDF is*

*only a portion of the 266-pg book, but allows you to see layout, contents, etc.)*



Many agencies, businesses and organizations across North America use custom copies of "IT'S A DISASTER!" for their employees, volunteers, customers and whole communities.

We discount our 266-page paperback up to **70% off** list (or **\$4.50** ea), and you can customize red books with stickers ... or personalize books in the print process on 1,000 units (or more) at no additional cost. The covers and first 12 pages can be customized in full color. And you can upgrade your order to add **48 to 288 extra** color glossy pages to include grant-specific data, marketing data, ads and coupons in books.

#### Some creative uses include...

- \* Changing entire book cover (including the title) + adding your logos, safety data or plans, maps and special messages on 12 to 300 pages for local communities!
- \* Collaborating with public and private partners to include coupons, QR codes and freebies on everyday products and services, and incentivize the public to keep books handy!

FSC has some [revenue sharing ideas](#) to help nonprofits, schools and First Responders **raise funds** while educating local communities. For example, collaborate with Chambers, Rotary Clubs and others and use 250 (of up to 300) customizable pages charging just **16 cents** per full page color ad. (That's cheaper than a postcard!) That would **raise \$40 per book** for your project ... plus its undedicated matchable dollars.

Learn more at [www.fedhealth.net](http://www.fedhealth.net) or contact me direct to discuss your needs. As always ... we're completely open to ANY idea that gets this data into the publics' hands and benefits our country.

Stay safe,

Bill Liebsch  
President & CEO  
Fedhealth

Toll-free: 1-888-999-4325

[bill@fedhealth.net](mailto:bill@fedhealth.net)

# IT'S A DISASTER!

...and what are YOU  
gonna do about it?

5th Edition

A Disaster Preparedness, Prevention  
& Basic First Aid Manual

by Bill & Janet Liebsch

Copyright © 1999-2017 by W. L. (Bill) and Janet Liebsch. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction in any manner (electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise) is prohibited without the prior written permission of the authors (but we're easy ~ please call!)

Published by Fedhealth • [www.fedhealth.net](http://www.fedhealth.net) • [www.itsadisaster.net](http://www.itsadisaster.net)

Printed in the U.S.A.

Prepress by Jeremy Wesanen

Printed by CDS (an RR Donnelley Company) • [www.cdspubs.com](http://www.cdspubs.com)

5th Edition: August 2009 (Revised June 2016)

paperback ISBN 978-1-930131-25-5

ebook ISBN 978-1-930131-26-2

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2006938576

## DEDICATION

*This manual is dedicated to Volunteers all around the world who give their heart, soul, energy, and time unselfishly for the betterment of our society.  
Thank you.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bill and Janet Liebsch are the founders of Fedhealth, a publishing and marketing company formed in 1999 to help the public focus on preparedness and health-related issues. They are dedicated to developing and marketing collaborative programs that primarily benefit First Responders, schools, and volunteers. Fedhealth's books and ebooks are continually updated on preparedness and safety-related topics. To order additional copies and to learn about fundraising programs and free customization, visit [www.fedhealth.net](http://www.fedhealth.net)

## DISCLAIMER

The authors of this Manual are not licensed physicians, and the enclosed suggestions should not replace the advice of trained medical staff and officials. This information is not intended as a substitute for a first aid course, but reviews basic first aid measures that could be used when professional medical assistance is delayed or temporarily unavailable due to a major disaster or crisis. All data compiled here is for informational purposes only and neither the authors nor Fedhealth can accept responsibility for any injury, loss or damage arising from the use of this information. During a time of crisis, citizens should heed the advice of local officials over the data contained in this book.

# INTRODUCTION

If you have never been involved in any type of major disaster, count yourself among the lucky ones and realize that emergencies and disasters can happen anywhere and anytime.

The confusion immediately following a disaster is scary - especially if you have not prepared yourself in advance and discussed these ideas with your family members.

Hopefully every time you see or hear about a disaster it makes you stop and think... "What if that was me or my family?" But what have YOU done to get yourself and your family ready? The best thing you can do to deal with any type of emergency situation is...

**BE AWARE... BE PREPARED... and... HAVE A PLAN!**

If you do these 3 things, the life you save could be your own... because what you don't know CAN hurt you!

The more the public is prepared for a disaster, the less strain we place on our local emergency services. Any major disaster will temporarily swamp First Responders, therefore, both the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency recommend persons to try to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours following a disaster. And if you are prepared for a longer period (like 2 to 4 weeks or more)... that's even better!

A majority of this information was compiled from various publications provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, Public Safety Canada, the CDC, the Public Health Agency of Canada and others to help assist you in preparing for various types of disasters and basic first aid. It also offers suggestions on personal checklists and important telephone numbers for your family members and emergency groups that can be written in the spaces provided or attached inside this manual. Most importantly, there are many web sites throughout the book to help you find more information.

We realize you may not experience every type of disaster in your part of the world, but if you ever travel you could potentially be placed in a disaster situation so please educate yourself and your family.

Please stop your hectic lives for just a few hours and sit down with your entire family (from children to seniors) to read this Manual and discuss how each of you would handle these types of situations.

It will be quality time with your loved ones and could save your lives!

# CONTENTS

Dedication & Disclaimer	.ii
Revenue sharing ideas using this Public Private Partnership tool	. . . . . iii
Introduction	. . . . .iv
Disaster Facts & Figures	. . . . .1
General Facts & Figures on Disasters	. . . . .2
Facts & Figures by Type of Disaster	. . . . .3

## **Section 1 - Family Emergency Plan, Kits & Shelter . . . . .7**

Family Emergency Plan Checklist	. . . . .8
Learn About Risks & Existing Plans	. . . . .8
Tips on Making <u>YOUR</u> Family Plan	. . . . .8
Tips for Elderly & Disabled Family Members	. . . . .10
Tips for Pets or Livestock / Large Animals	. . . . .11
Family Emergency Plan	. . . . .12
Disaster Supplies Kit	. . . . .14
Water	. . . . .14
Food	. . . . .15
First Aid Kits	. . . . .15
Tools and Emergency Supplies	. . . . .17
Sanitation	. . . . .19
Clothing and Bedding	. . . . .19
Special Items (for Infants, Elderly & Disabled, Pets)	. . . . .20
Car Kit	. . . . .21
Classroom / Locker / Office Kit	. . . . .22
Suggestions and Reminders About Kits	. . . . .23
Think About Shelter	. . . . .24

## **Section 2 – Disaster Preparedness & Prevention . . . . .25**

What to Do <u>BEFORE</u> a Disaster Strikes (Mitigation Tips)	. . . . .26
What is Mitigation?	. . . . .26
FEMA’s Mitigation Directorate	. . . . .26
Mitigation Tips to Help Prevent Damage & Loss	. . . . .27
Air Quality Mitigation	. . . . .27
Earthquake Mitigation	. . . . .27
Fire Mitigation	. . . . .28
Flood Mitigation	. . . . .28
Lightning Mitigation	. . . . .29
Power Loss Mitigation	. . . . .29
Wildfire Mitigation	. . . . .30
Wind Mitigation	. . . . .31

Winter Storm & Extreme Cold Mitigation . . . . .	33
Mitigation Tips Summary . . . . .	34
Agencies and Groups Involved with Preparedness & Response . . . . .	36
What are <u>YOU</u> gonna do about ...	
Avalanches, Landslides & Mudflows . . . . .	37
Avalanches . . . . .	37
Landslides and Mudflows . . . . .	39
Civil Disturbances or Civil Unrest . . . . .	42
Earthquake . . . . .	43
Evacuation . . . . .	47
Extreme Heat . . . . .	50
Fires & Wildfires . . . . .	52
Fires . . . . .	52
Wildfires . . . . .	55
Flood . . . . .	57
Hailstorms . . . . .	60
Hazardous Materials . . . . .	62
Hazardous Materials Disaster . . . . .	62
Household Chemical Emergency . . . . .	65
Hurricanes, Cyclones & Typhoons . . . . .	66
Nuclear Power Plant Emergency . . . . .	72
Terrorism . . . . .	77
Before <u>ANY</u> Type of Terrorist Attack . . . . .	79
About the National Terrorism Advisory System . . . . .	80
About Cyber Attacks . . . . .	81
Before a Cyber Attack . . . . .	83
About Chemical Agents . . . . .	83
Basic Categories . . . . .	83
BZ . . . . .	85
Chlorine . . . . .	85
Cyanide . . . . .	86
Sarin . . . . .	87
Sulfur Mustard / Mustard Gas . . . . .	88
VX . . . . .	90
Before / During / After a Chemical Attack . . . . .	91
For More Information about Chemical Agents . . . . .	93
About Biological Agents . . . . .	94
Basic Groups . . . . .	94
Anthrax . . . . .	95
Botulism . . . . .	96
Plague . . . . .	96
Ricin . . . . .	97

Smallpox .....	98
Tularemia .....	100
Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (VHFs) .....	101
Before / During / After a Biological Attack .....	102
For More Information about Biological Agents .....	104
About Radiological Threat or Device .....	104
RDD (Dirty Bomb) .....	104
Bomb Threat .....	105
Suspicious Package .....	105
Before a Radiological Threat or Event .....	106
During / After a Radiological Event or Explosion .....	106
For More Information about Radiological Emergencies ..	108
About Nuclear Threat or Device .....	109
What Happens When a Nuke Explodes? .....	109
Most Dangerous Part of Attack? (Radiation) .....	112
How do I Protect Myself and My Family? (Shelters) .....	115
Before / During / After a Nuclear Attack .....	119
For More Information about National Security .....	125
Thunderstorms .....	127
Tornado .....	129
Tsunami .....	132
Volcanic Eruption .....	135
Winter Storms & Extreme Cold .....	138
Tips on Recovering from a Disaster ... ..	142
Emotional Recovery Tips – Handling Emotions .....	142
Some Normal Reactions to Disasters .....	142
Tips for Adults & Kids .....	142
General Recovery Tips – AFTER a Disaster .....	144
Returning to a Damaged Home .....	144
Getting Help: Disaster Assistance .....	146
Mitigation (Reducing the Impact for the Next Time) .....	148
Tips on Shelter Living During or After an Emergency .....	150
Tips on Using Household Foods .....	151
Tips on Water Purification .....	152
Tips on Sanitation of Human Waste .....	153
Tips on Helping Others in Their Time of Need .....	154
Dealing with Death or Mass Casualties .....	155
<b>Section 3 - Information &amp; Tips on Basic First Aid .....</b>	<b>157</b>
What are <u>YOU</u> gonna do about... an EMERGENCY? .....	158
Tips on the ABCs ... Airway, Breathing & Circulation .....	158
Tips on Making <u>YOUR</u> “Emergency Action” Plan .....	159
Tips on Calling 9-1-1 for an Ambulance .....	160



Tips on Reducing the Spread of Germs or Diseases . . . . .	161
Tips on Good Samaritan Laws . . . . .	161
What are <u>YOU</u> gonna do about ...	
Bites & Stings . . . . .	162
Animal & Human Bites . . . . .	162
Insect Bites & Stings . . . . .	162
Bites & Stings (in general) . . . . .	162
West Nile Virus . . . . .	164
Things to do to avoid mosquito bites . . . . .	164
For More Information about Vector-Borne Diseases . . . . .	165
Sea Critter (Marine Life) Stings . . . . .	165
Snake Bites . . . . .	166
Spider Bites, Scorpion Stings & Ticks . . . . .	167
Bleeding . . . . .	169
Controlling Bleeding . . . . .	169
Internal Bleeding . . . . .	170
Nosebleeds . . . . .	170
Slashed or Severed Body Parts/Amputation . . . . .	170
Breathing Problems . . . . .	171
Asthma Attack . . . . .	171
Rescue Breathing (Not Breathing) . . . . .	171
Broken or Fractured Bones . . . . .	173
Tips on Splinting . . . . .	173
Burns . . . . .	174
Burns from Fire or Hot Liquids . . . . .	174
Chemical Burns . . . . .	175
Electrical Burns . . . . .	175
Sunburn . . . . .	176
Choking . . . . .	177
Adults & Children . . . . .	177
Infants . . . . .	178
Cold-Related Illnesses . . . . .	179
Frostbite . . . . .	179
Hypothermia . . . . .	180
Convulsions & Seizures . . . . .	181
CPR – See Heart Problems . . . . .	188
Dizziness & Fainting . . . . .	182
Drowning . . . . .	183
Ear Injuries . . . . .	184
Eye Injuries . . . . .	185
Head, Neck or Spine Injuries . . . . .	187
Heart Problems . . . . .	188

Heart Attack	188
Cardiac Arrest (Giving CPR)	189
Heat-Related Illnesses	193
Heat Exhaustion	193
Heat Stroke	193
Infection	195
Infectious Diseases	196
Influenza (flu - seasonal, avian, H1N1, etc.)	196
Ebola virus	197
MERS (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome)	197
C. diff (Clostridium difficile or C. difficile)	197
Staph (staphylococcus aureus & MRSA)	198
How Infectious Diseases Spread	199
Reducing the Spread of Infectious Diseases	199
For More Information about Infectious Diseases	199
Poisoning	200
Poison - Absorbed through the Skin	200
Poison - Inhaled by Breathing	201
Poison - Poisonous Plants	201
Poison - Swallowed	205
Shock	206
Stroke	207
Tooth Injuries	208

**Section 4 - Emergency Contact Names & Numbers . . . . .209**

About the Red Cross (American, Canadian, Mexican & Intl)	210
About the Salvation Army (American, Canadian, Mexican & Intl)	211
About the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	212
FEMA Partners	212
Local Emergency Management Agencies	212
State and Territory Emergency Management Agencies	212
National Emergency Management Organizations	216
Federal-level Partners	216
Partnerships with the Private Sector	217
National Response Framework	217
About Public Safety Canada	218
Partner Agencies	218
Emergency Preparedness in Canada	218
Provincial & Territorial Emergency Management Orgs	219
For More Information about Public Safety Canada	220
APPENDIX A - Citizen Corps / CERT (Volunteer Programs)	221
What is Citizen Corps?	221

Citizen Corps Programs & Partners . . . . .	221
Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) . . . . .	221
Fire Corps . . . . .	221
Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) . . . . .	221
Neighborhood Watch . . . . .	222
Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) . . . . .	222
Affiliate Programs & Organizations . . . . .	222
More About CERT . . . . .	223
For More Information about Citizen Corps & CERT . . . . .	223
APPENDIX B - Business Continuity (Plan for the Unexpected) . . . . .	224
What is Business Continuity? . . . . .	224
Tips on Developing Your Business Plan . . . . .	224
Tips on Protecting Your Business . . . . .	228
Additional Business Continuity Resources . . . . .	231
APPENDIX C - School Safety Resources (Tools for Schools) . . . . .	233
APPENDIX D - Active Shooter Preparedness (How to Respond) . . . . .	235
End Notes . . . . .	238
Resources . . . . .	238
Additional Resources & Web Sites . . . . .	245
Index . . . . .	246



# Section 1

## Family Emergency Plan, Kits & Shelter

# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN CHECKLIST

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act and local first responders may not be able to reach you right away. **PREPARE NOW** for a sudden emergency and discuss these ideas with your entire family to create a **Family Emergency Plan**.

Even though this checklist looks long and scary, it is easy to do and can help you make a plan. We suggest you and your family review this list, then read through the Manual since there are many tips mentioned in various topics and Sections that could help develop your plan.

PLEASE make some time in your busy lives to prepare for a disaster... a few minutes now could possibly save a life when a disaster hits. Remember - **be aware... be prepared... and have a plan!**

## LEARN ABOUT RISKS & EXISTING PLANS:

- [ ] Find out which disasters could occur in your area and ask local officials how to prepare for each disaster, but read this Manual first.
- [ ] Ask how you will be warned of an emergency.
- [ ] Learn your community's evacuation routes and map them out using a free service like Google Maps or Mapquest or order Depiction.
- [ ] Ask about special assistance for elderly or disabled persons.
- [ ] Ask your workplace about emergency plans and learn about plans at your children's school(s) or day care center(s).

## TIPS ON MAKING YOUR FAMILY PLAN:

*(Review all and complete **Family Emergency Plan** on pages 12-13):*

- [ ] Meet with household members to talk about the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes and other emergencies. Explain how to respond to each using the tips in this Manual.
- [ ] Find safe spots in your home for each type of disaster that affects your community. *(see Section 2 for explanations of each disaster)*
- [ ] Talk about what to do when there are power outages and injuries.
- [ ] Take a basic first aid and CPR class (or join a CERT - see page 224).

- [ ] Draw a floor plan of your home showing doors, windows and stairways. Mark locations of first aid and disaster kits, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, ladders, and utility shut-off points. Next, use a colored pen to draw a broken line charting at least 2 escape routes from each room. And practice drills!
- [ ] Show family members how to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches when necessary.
- [ ] Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones and teach children how and when to call 9-1-1. (*see Section 3*)
- [ ] Make sure household members understand they should turn on the radio for emergency information.
- [ ] Pick one out-of-state and a local friend or relative for family members to call if separated during a disaster. (It is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area.)
- [ ] Pick two emergency meeting places in case you can't go home: 1) A place near your home. 2) A place outside the neighborhood.
- [ ] Teach children meeting places and emergency phone numbers in case you get separated during a crisis.
- [ ] Put **ICE** before a name and number in cell phone address books so First Responders would know who to call “**In Case of Emergency**”.
- [ ] Make sure family members know how to send and receive photos and text messages (if you have those capabilities on your cells). Also consider joining a network like Twitter or a local text message alert system to receive emergency broadcast warnings, updates, etc.
- [ ] Get some FRS walkie-talkies and teach family how to use them.
- [ ] Practice emergency evacuation drills with all household members at least two times each year. Also learn how to get involved with America's *PrepareAthon!* at [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare)
- [ ] Consider doing a Living Will and/or a Healthcare Power of Attorney.
- [ ] Keep family records in a water- and fire-proof container. Consider keeping another set of records in a safety deposit box offsite.
- [ ] Check if you have enough insurance coverage. (*see Section 2 for more information on flood insurance.*)

## TIPS FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED FAMILY MEMBERS:

- [ ] Ask about special aid that may be available in an emergency for elderly and disabled family members. Find out if assistance is available for evacuation and in public shelters. FEMA suggests people with a disability register with local fire department so help can be provided quickly in an emergency (if available in your area).
- [ ] Ask your children's teachers and caregivers about emergency plans for schools, day care centers or nursing homes.
- [ ] If you currently have a personal care attendant from an agency, check to see if the agency will be providing services at another location if there is an evacuation -- and tell family members.
- [ ] Learn what to do and where to go for each type of emergency. For example, basements are not wheelchair-accessible so you should have alternate safe places for different types of disasters for disabled or elderly persons.
- [ ] Learn what to do in case of power outages and injuries. Know how to start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment!
- [ ] If someone in the home uses a wheelchair, make sure 2 exits are wheelchair-accessible in case one exit is blocked.
- [ ] Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you have trouble getting around.
- [ ] Both elderly and disabled persons should wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace at all times if they have special needs.
- [ ] Talk to your doctor to ask if you can keep a 60-90 day supply of medications and special medical parts and supplies on-hand in case of emergency.
- [ ] Consider setting up a "Buddy" system with a roommate, trusted friend or neighbor. Give buddy a copy of your **Family Emergency Plan** and an extra house key or tell them where one is available.
- [ ] Consider putting a few personal items in a lightweight draw string bag (e.g. a whistle, some medications, a small flashlight, extra hearing aid batteries, etc.) and tie it to your wheelchair or walker for emergencies. Make sure to rotate items so current and working.
- [ ] Visit the **National Organization on Disability** web site to learn more about Emergency Preparedness issues at [www.nod.org](http://www.nod.org) .

## TIPS FOR PETS OR LIVESTOCK / LARGE ANIMALS:

### TIPS FOR PETS

- [ ] If you have to evacuate your home, DO NOT leave pets behind! Make sure you take a secure pet carrier, leash or harness with you.
- [ ] Emergency shelters may not accept pets (unless it is a service animal). Find out which motels and hotels in your area allow pets in advance of needing them. Ask your veterinarian or animal shelter if they board animals during a disaster or emergency.
- [ ] Make sure identification tags are current and securely fastened to pet's collar or get a microchip implanted in your pet. Keep a current photo in your wallet or cell phone for identification purposes.
- [ ] Make sure a roommate, trusted neighbor or friend has an extra house key to evacuate your pets in the event you are unavailable.

### TIPS FOR LIVESTOCK / LARGE ANIMALS

- [ ] Evacuate livestock whenever possible. Make arrangements for evacuation, including routes and host sites, in advance. At least two alternate evacuation routes should be mapped out as a backup.
- [ ] The evacuation site should have food, water, veterinary care, handlers, equipment and proper facilities.
- [ ] Trucks, trailers, and vehicles for transporting animals should be available with experienced handlers and drivers to transport them.
- [ ] If evacuation is not possible, a decision must be made whether to move large animals to available shelter or turn them outside. This decision should be based on the type of disaster and the soundness and location of the shelter or structure.
- [ ] If you board animals, ask if facility has an evacuation plan in place.

Next, we suggest you sit with your family and write down your **Family Emergency Plan** using the next 2 pages as a guide. Then review how to put together a **Disaster Supplies Kit** since you may not have much time if you are told to evacuate quickly.

Again, we suggest you and family members read this manual together - especially your kids - since there are many tips here that could help you make a plan and learn what to do if the unexpected happens. You may just want to review the book first and then come back to this Section later.



# FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

*(Post a copy of this information near phone and in kits for easy access.)*

### Emergency Numbers

In a life-threatening emergency, **call 9-1-1** or local emergency number:

Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Ambulance: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 (U.S. only) \_\_\_\_\_

### Out-of-State Contact

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

### Local Contact

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

### Family & Friends Work / Cell Numbers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

### Neighbors

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

### School Information (if you have children)

Child / School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Ph#: \_\_\_\_\_

Child / School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Ph#: \_\_\_\_\_

Child / School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Ph#: \_\_\_\_\_

### Family Doctors

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

### Medical Allergies

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Allergy: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Allergy: \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Prescriptions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Medication: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other

Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Electric company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gas company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Water company: \_\_\_\_\_

### EMERGENCY MEETING PLACES (OR AREAS)

In case you get separated during an emergency or disaster, decide on two Meeting Places or Areas where you can join each other. Include children in this decision so they understand why they should meet here.

1. Near your home (within 1 mile of your house) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Away from your home (at least 5 miles from your house) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: If these meeting places cannot be reached, text or send pictures of a new location or a landmark you are near so others can find you.

## DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

Disasters happen anytime and anywhere -- and, when disaster strikes, you may not have much time to respond. And sometimes services may be cut off or first responders can't reach people right away. Would you and your family be prepared to cope until help arrives?

Both FEMA and the Red Cross recommend keeping enough supplies in your home to meet your family's needs for at *least* three days (we suggest 2 to 4 weeks or more in home.) Once disaster threatens or hits, you may not have time to shop or search for supplies ... but, if you've gathered supplies in advance in your **Disaster Supplies Kit**, your family could handle an evacuation or shelter living easier. And since everything is all together in one place... all you gotta do is **GRAB & GO!**

Put items you'd most likely need (water, food, first aid, emergency items, etc.) in a container that is easy-to-carry and that will fit in your vehicle. For example, a large trash can or storage container with a lid that snaps shut tightly (some even come with wheels), or a waterproof backpack or large duffel bag (waterproof, if possible) would be useful.

We're also including suggestions for a **CAR KIT** and a **CLASSROOM / LOCKER / OFFICE KIT** since these are usually the most common places you would be if and when a disaster strikes.

There are seven basic categories of supplies you should stock in your home kit: **water, food, first aid supplies, tools and emergency supplies, sanitation, clothing and bedding, and special items.**

Take advantage of sales and stock up as you can -- also put dates on food cans or labels to show when they were purchased. Supplies should ALL be checked every 6 months to make sure they are still good and working! We suggest you mark dates on your calendar and have the entire family help check all the items together. It'll be good quality time with the family and give you all a chance to update any phone numbers or information that has changed.

### WATER

A normally active person needs to drink at least 2 quarts (2 litres) of water each day and possibly as much as a gallon (4 litres) a day.

[ ] Store one gallon of water per person per day (two quarts/litres for drinking and two quarts/litres for food preparation and sanitation).

- [ ] Keep at least a 3 day supply of water (or more) for each person in home and store extra water for pets. Rotate new cases / bottles every 6 months. Consider getting large 55-gallon drums or containers for long-term water storage from a reputable dealer and treat the water.
- [ ] Consider purchasing a certified portable water purification filter.
- [ ] Review TIPS ON WATER PURIFICATION at end of Section 2.

## FOOD

Choose foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno or a small propane camping stove. Select foods that are compact and lightweight and rotate food out every 6 months. (Keep items like this handy in pantry too.)

- [ ] Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, and vegetables (and put in a manual can opener!!) Make sure cans don't have dents in them.
- [ ] Canned juices, milk, soups (if powder or cubes, store extra water)
- [ ] Staples - sugar, salt, pepper
- [ ] High energy foods - peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix, nuts, jerky, dried fruits, Emergency Food bars, etc.
- [ ] Vitamins & herbs (e.g. a good multiple, Vitamins C & E, garlic pills [boosts immune], L-Tyrosine [an amino acid for stress], etc.)
- [ ] Foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets
- [ ] Foods for your pet (if necessary)
- [ ] Comfort / stress foods - cookies, hard candy, suckers, sweetened cereal, instant coffee, tea bags, powdered drink mixes, etc.
- [ ] Some companies offer survival and long-term storage foods that are freeze dried and sold in months, 1-year, and 2-year supplies

## FIRST AID KITS

You should always be prepared and keep a First Aid Kit in your home and in every car and make sure everyone knows where kits are and how to use them. And if you like the outdoors (hiking, biking, etc.) you should carry a small Kit in your fanny pack or backpack as a precaution.

There are many different sizes of First Aid Kits on the market that vary in price. You can also make your own kits using things that may already be in your home. Consider including the following items in a **waterproof** container or bag so you can be prepared for almost any type of emergency.

We realize there are a lot of items suggested here, but the more you prepare ... the better off you and your family will be during a disaster situation.

### **ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT**

- Ace bandage(s)
- Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Adhesive tape
- Antibiotic ointment or gel
- Antiseptic towelettes
- Assorted sizes of safety pins & needles
- Box of Baking soda
- Cleansing agent (isopropyl alcohol, hydrogen peroxide and/or soap)
- Cold & Heat packs
- Contact lens solution and Eyewash solution
- Cotton and Cotton swabs
- Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- Dental repair kit (usually near toothpaste section)
- Disposable Face shield for Rescue Breathing
- Disposable gloves
- Face masks (with N95 rated particulate filter and/or Nanomasks)
- Flashlight & batteries - check often to make sure it works & batteries are good (Tip: remove batteries while stored or get hand crank units)
- Gauze pads
- Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol)
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Lip balm (one with SPF is best)
- Liquid bandage (to seal cuts or scrapes)
- Moleskin (for blisters on feet)
- Petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Plastic bags
- Roller gauze
- Scissors
- Small bottle of hand lotion
- Snake bite kit with extractor
- Sunscreen (one with SPF 30 or higher and 3 or 4 star UVA protection)
- Thermometer
- Tweezers

### **NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT**

- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

- Antacid (for upset stomach)
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antihistamine and decongestant (for allergic reactions or allergies and sinus problems)
- Aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen sodium
- Laxative
- Potassium Iodide (*see NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCY*)
- Vitamins & herbs (e.g. a good multiple, Vitamins C & E, garlic pills or zinc [boosts immune sys], L-Tyrosine [amino acid for stress], etc.)

### **PRESCRIPTION DRUGS TO INCLUDE IN FIRST AID KIT**

Since it may be hard to get prescriptions filled during a disaster, talk to your physician or pharmacist about storing these types of medications. Keep a 3-month supply of medications and supplies on-hand if at all possible. And make sure to check labels for special instructions and expiration dates.

### **TIPS ON SOME INEXPENSIVE FIRST AID ITEMS**

**Activated charcoal** - absorbs poisons and drugs in the stomach and intestines and helps prevent toxins from being absorbed into the bloodstream by coating intestinal walls. (Check with the Poison Control Center before taking since it doesn't work on all toxic substances.) It's found at natural foods stores and pharmacies in powder, liquid, and capsule forms. Capsules can be broken open to use powder for making a paste on insect bites and stings.

**Baking soda** - aid for heartburn or indigestion; use as substitute for toothpaste; sprinkle in bath water for sore muscles or bites & stings; or make a paste (3 parts baking soda to 1 part water) to use on stings or insect bites, poison ivy, canker sores, sunburn, and rashes (but too strong for infants!)

**Hydrogen peroxide** - can help clean and disinfect wounds, treat canker sores, gingivitis, and minor earaches. Also can be used for cleaning hands or for brushing teeth. (The reason it foams up on skin or item is because of the oxygen at work - means it's killing germs!)

**Meat tenderizer** - (check ingredient list on bottle for "papain") make a paste to use on insect bites and stings. Papain is a natural enzyme derived from papaya that can help break down insect venom.

**Vinegar** - helps relieve jellyfish stings, sunburn, and swimmer's ear.

### **TOOLS AND EMERGENCY SUPPLIES**

The following items may come in handy if you have to evacuate or if stuck at home short or long-term.

- [ ] Aluminum foil and resealable plastic bags
- [ ] Battery-operated radio and extra batteries (remember to check batteries every 6 months). Also consider radios like the NOAA Weather Radio and Environment Canada's Weatheradio with one-alert feature that automatically alerts you when a Watch or Warning has been issued. Or get a hand crank radio with flashlight.
- [ ] Battery-operated travel alarm clock
- [ ] Cash or traveler's check and some change
- [ ] CD (could be used as a reflector to signal planes if stranded)
- [ ] Compass
- [ ] Extra copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [ ] Flashlight & headlamp plus extra batteries & bulbs (check every 6 months) and/or get solar, hand crank or shake flashlights / lanterns
- [ ] Fire extinguisher: small canister, ABC type
- [ ] Generator (learn how to use and store it in advance)
- [ ] Manual can opener and a utility knife
- [ ] Map of the area (to help locate shelters, alternate routes, etc.)
- [ ] Matches, lighters, flint and candles in a waterproof container
- [ ] Medicine dropper (e.g. measure bleach to purify water, etc.)
- [ ] Needles & thread
- [ ] Paper, pencil (store in baggies to keep dry)
- [ ] Paper or plastic cups & plates, utensils, a few pots & pans
- [ ] Plastic sheeting (for shelter, lean-to, or sealing room during chemical / hazardous material threat - see *HAZARDOUS MATERIALS*)
- [ ] Power inverter
- [ ] Radiation detection devices (like a dosimeter, etc. - see page 112)
- [ ] Tape (plastic & duct), rope, twine, paracord and bungee cords

- [ ] Signal flares
- [ ] Small hand tools (pliers, screwdrivers, shovel or trowel, etc.)
- [ ] Solar (or handcrank) charger for cell phone, PDA, etc.
- [ ] Sterno, small camp stove and propane bottle(s) and/or solar oven
- [ ] Walkie-talkies (low cost set of FRS radios and store extra batteries)
- [ ] Whistle (can be used to call for help in an emergency)
- [ ] Wrench (to turn off household gas and water)

## **SANITATION**

Make sure all these items are in a waterproof containers or plastic bags.

- [ ] Disinfectant (*see TIPS ON SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE*)
- [ ] Feminine supplies (tampons, pads, etc.)
- [ ] Household chlorine bleach (regular scent), disinfectant spray/wipes
- [ ] Personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, toothpaste or baking soda, brush, comb, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, etc.)
- [ ] Plastic garbage bags with twist ties and small plastic grocery bags
- [ ] Plastic bucket with tight lid (for human waste) or waste kits, WAG Bags, Poo powder, etc.
- [ ] Soap, liquid detergent, hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol), moist towelettes or sanitizing wipes, hydrogen peroxide, etc.
- [ ] Toilet paper, baby wipes and paper towels
- [ ] Wash cloths, hand and bath towels, dish rags & towels, etc.

## **CLOTHING AND BEDDING**

- [ ] At least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person
- [ ] Sturdy shoes or work boots and extra socks



- [ ] Hats, work and regular gloves, and thermal underwear
- [ ] Blankets or sleeping bags (small emergency ones are cheap and about the size of a wallet ... or pack extra garbage bags)
- [ ] Rain gear or poncho (or use plastic garbage bags)
- [ ] Safety glasses and/or Sunglasses
- [ ] Small stuffed animal, toy or book for each child at bedtime

## **SPECIAL ITEMS**

- [ ] Entertainment - games, books and playing cards
- [ ] Important Family Documents - keep in a waterproof, portable safe container or scan to flash drive (e.g. ProtectMyPapers.com) or use a secure online backup service (e.g. Carbonite, etc). Also keep copies of papers off-site in a safety deposit box or with a family member.
  - Extra set of car keys, cash, traveler's checks and credit card
  - Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
  - Passports, social security #s/cards, immunization records
  - Bank account and Credit card numbers + phone numbers
  - Inventory of valuable household goods
  - Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates, photo IDs)
  - Recent pictures of all family members and pets for i.d. needs
- [ ] RED and GREEN construction paper or RED and GREEN crayons or markers (can signal rescue workers to stop or move on)

Remember to pack things for family members with special needs:

### **For Infants**

- [ ] Bottles, Formula, powdered milk, cereals and juices
- [ ] Diapers, baby wipes and diaper rash ointment
- [ ] Medications
- [ ] Small soft toys

### **For Elderly and Disabled (Children & Adults)**

- [ ] Bladder control garments and pads

- [ ] Denture needs
- [ ] Extra eye glasses or contact lenses and supplies
- [ ] Extra hearing aid batteries
- [ ] Extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, catheters or special equipment
- [ ] A list of style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemaker, defibrillator, etc. and copy of Medicare card
- [ ] List of prescription medications and dosages or allergies (if any)
- [ ] Special medicines for heart, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.
- [ ] Store backup equipment (such as a manual wheelchair, cane or walker) at a neighbor's home or at another location

### **For Pets**

- [ ] Cage or carrier, bedding, leash, muzzle, litter & box, trash bags, etc.
- [ ] Food, manual can opener, bowls, chew toys or treats, etc.
- [ ] Medications and copies of medical / immunization records

### **CAR KIT**

Keep most or all of these items in a waterproof pack so everything is together and easy to grab. Make one for each vehicle too!

- [ ] Battery or crank radio, flashlight/headlamp, extra batteries & bulbs
- [ ] Blanket (small emergency ones are cheap and the size of a wallet)
- [ ] Bottled water and non-perishable foods (Tip: store food in empty coffee cans to keep it from getting squashed)
- [ ] CD (could be used as a reflector to signal planes if stranded)
- [ ] Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [ ] Extra clothes (jeans and sweater), sturdy shoes and socks
- [ ] First Aid Kit (with disposable gloves and N95 rated face masks)
- [ ] Local maps with evacuation routes pre-marked

- [ ] Personal hygiene items (hand sanitizer, toilet paper, tissues, tampons, etc.)
- [ ] Plastic bags that seal
- [ ] Shovel (small collapsible ones are available)
- [ ] Short rubber hose (for siphoning)
- [ ] Small fire extinguisher (5 lb., ABC type)
- [ ] Tools - Tire repair kit, booster cables, flares, screw drivers, pliers, knife, wire or rope, etc.
- [ ] Work gloves

## **CLASSROOM / LOCKER / OFFICE KIT**

Keep items in a small pack, drawstring bag or duffel so everything is together and easy to grab!

- [ ] Battery-operated radio and extra batteries (or a hand crank radio)
- [ ] Copy of *IT'S A DISASTER!* manual
- [ ] Emergency blanket (small, cheap, & light - the size of a wallet)
- [ ] A few plastic trash bags with twist ties
- [ ] Mini flashlight, bulbs and batteries, or headlamp or hand crank unit
- [ ] Non-perishable foods like crackers, cookies, trail mix, granola bars, etc. (Ask children to help choosing food and make sure they understand this is for Emergencies!)
- [ ] Personal hygiene items (packet of tissues, moist towelettes, hand sanitizer, comb, toothbrush, tampons, etc.)
- [ ] Small First Aid kit (with disposable gloves and N95 face masks)
- [ ] Small stuffed animal, book, or toy (for children)
- [ ] Sweatshirt or sweater (or a full change of clothes if enough room)
- [ ] Walkie-talkies (low cost set of FRS radios and store extra batteries)

[ ] Water ... as much as you can fit! Small juice boxes are good too.

[ ] Work gloves to protect your hands (especially from broken glass)

## SUGGESTIONS & REMINDERS ABOUT KITS

Remember, both the Red Cross and FEMA recommend keeping enough supplies to meet your family's needs for at *least* three days, but consider a longer period like 96 hours or 2 weeks or more.

You may not have time to shop or search for items once a disaster threatens or hits so make your kits now so you're prepared for the unexpected.

Some things to keep in mind include ...

- Store your **Disaster Supplies Kit** in convenient place known to ALL family members. Keep a smaller version in the trunk or back of every vehicle (see CAR KIT).
- Keep items in airtight plastic bags to keep them dry in kit.
- Take advantage of end-of-season clearance sales and grocery sales (esp. can goods) and stock up as you can. Look around your home since you may be able to put a lot of these things together from what is already on shelves or in drawers or medicine cabinets.
- Replace your stored food and water supply every 6 months. It's best to test or replace batteries at this time too. Make a game of it by keeping track on a calendar or on a poster drawn by children so they can help. Also, everyone should meet every 6 months anyway to go over the **Family Emergency Plan** and update any data (phone numbers, address changes, etc.) *Suggestion: Do this every Daylight Savings time - it's twice a year on a weekend so easy to remember.*
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medicines.
- Visit the U.S. Department of Homeland Security web site for more tips about Kits at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

# What are YOU gonna do about...

## CIVIL DISTURBANCES OR CIVIL UNREST?

Civil disturbances (also called civil unrest or riots) can happen for many different reasons like frustration with the government, a bad court decision, drunken mayhem after sporting events, or racial tensions in a neighborhood. Or sometimes a peaceful rally, concert or party can turn violent and spill over into neighborhoods or business districts. Sometimes authorities can block off the affected areas -- other times things may just go crazy.

### **DURING A RIOT OR CIVIL UNREST:**

Stay calm & be aware - If possible, avoid contact with rioters and keep a low profile. And leave the area as quickly and safely as possible.

Listen - If officials tell you to leave or to shelter-in-place ... DO it! Stay updated with local radio and TV reports since rumors may be flying around.

Evacuate? – If you are told to leave - do so ... and IF you have time...

- Secure your home or business. Lock doors and windows, back up files if possible, take valuables and important papers with you (or lock them up), etc.
- Don't try to drive through a crowd -- find another way out.

### Things to watch for:

- **flying objects or gas** - rioters may throw rocks, bottles, bricks, cans, fireworks, molotov cocktails ... and police may have to use rubber bullets, bean bags or tear gas for crowd control
- **damaged areas** - drunks and rioters may smash windows, burn tires, overturn cars and set buildings or homes on fire
- **suspicious packages** - rioters may call in bomb threats

Firearms - Sometimes looting occurs but be smart about protecting your property, it's not worth getting hurt or shot defending it. (Learn more about firearm safety from local law enforcement officials or at [www.nra.org](http://www.nra.org).)

Don't go there - Stay away from the area until authorities say all is clear.

National Guard - If things get out of hand, local law enforcement may request the National Guard come in and help so don't be alarmed if you see uniformed armed forces on the streets.

# What are YOU gonna do about... AN EVACUATION?

Evacuations are quite common and happen for a number of reasons – fires, floods, mudflows, hurricanes, or chemical spills on the roads or railways.

When community evacuations become necessary, local officials provide information to the public usually through the media. Government agencies, the Salvation Army, Red Cross, churches and other relief organizations provide emergency shelter and supplies. But, as we have said before, you should have enough food, water, clothing and emergency supplies for days or weeks (or more) in case you cannot be reached by relief efforts.

The amount of time to evacuate obviously depends on the type of disaster. Hurricanes can be tracked and allow a day or two notice to get ready, but many types of disasters happen without much notice... so prepare NOW!!

## **BEFORE AN EVACUATION:**

Ask & learn - Ask emergency management officials about community evacuation plans and learn the routes that should be used. Also learn the signs used for your area - and, if you're traveling, make a mental note what evacuation signs look like in case something happens while on the road. And ask if your local officials have developed pet-friendly shelters and pet-related disaster plans through the 2006 PETS Act.

Make a plan - Review Section 1 and develop a **Family Emergency Plan** (so you know where to meet if separated, how to contact everyone, have a **Disaster Supplies Kit** ready to go, etc.) If you don't have a car, make arrangements with friends, neighbors or local officials so you have a way to evacuate.

Think about your pets - Make a plan for your critters. Review Tips for Pets or Livestock / Large Animals on page 11 and pack supplies for them in your **Disaster Supplies Kit**.

Where do we go? - Talk with your family members and decide in advance where you would go in case you can't return home for weeks or months. If your home is damaged or destroyed or you're forced to leave your home due to on-going threats (like mudslides or flooding), you will need to find temporary or permanent living quarters. This could mean staying in a public shelter or hotel, living with friends or relatives, or renting a home or apartment in the middle of all the chaos, so discuss several options. Then, write down your various options and share them with relatives and friends.

Paperwork & money - As discussed in Section 1, put important paperwork (wills, photo I.D.s, insurance policies, list of bank and credit card numbers, etc.) in a portable fireproof container (and have copies in an off-site safety deposit box) so you have identification to get access to your bank or to set up new accounts if you have to relocate long-term to another town. Also keep copies on a CD, flash drive or external drive and store media in a safe place off-site or in a locked fireproof container. Or consider using a service that allows you to upload scans and securely store your documents on their servers.

Fill 'er up - Keep car fueled up -- stations may close during an emergency. (Try to stay in the habit of having at least half a tank of gas at all times.)

Learn to shut off - Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas and water at main switches and valves -- ask local utilities for instructions (and keep a wrench handy).

Review tips on basic needs - Please review TIPS ON SHELTER LIVING, TIPS ON USING HOUSEHOLD FOODS, TIPS ON WATER PURIFICATION and TIPS ON SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE near end of this section to prepare yourself and family for what to expect.

## **DURING AN EVACUATION:**

Listen - Keep up on news reports for the latest information.

Grab & Go - Grab your **Disaster Supplies Kit** (has water, food, clothing, emergency supplies, insurance and financial records, etc. ready to go).

What do I wear? - Put on protective clothing (long sleeve shirt and pants) and sturdy shoes - may even want to grab a jacket, hat or cap.

Shut off utilities - Turn off main water valve and electricity (if authorities tell you to do so).

Secure home - Close and lock doors and windows, unplug appliances, protect water pipes (if freezing weather), tie down boats, etc. (*See specific types of disaster for additional tips on securing home.*)

Take quick pics - Use your camera phone to take some shots of your home and property for a last minute inventory of things.

Pets - Make sure you take pets in secure carriers and bring food, water and leashes or harnesses with you. Grab medical records so you can prove immunizations are current. Realize some shelters may not accept pets so have a backup plan on where you'll go. If you have no alternative but to leave your pet at home, confine it to a safe area inside with dry food and

plenty of water. Leave bathroom door open and toilet lid up (or remove lid completely) so they can access additional water (but only if toilet is free of chemicals.) If you must leave your pet outside -- don't chain it!

Large animals - Hopefully you made arrangements in advance to evacuate livestock and/or large animals. If you must turn them loose, prepare halters for horses that include your name and phone numbers or spray paint your number on the animals and leave lots of food and water out.

Alert family / friends - Let others know where you are going (or at least leave a message or note in clear view explaining where you can be found). If pets are left on the property, put a note on door to alert rescue workers.

Twitter, Flickr, etc. - Social networking sites allow users to stay current on evacuation and recovery efforts. You may not have access to the Internet during or after a crisis, but text messages can sometimes get through when cell and phone systems are down. The Salvation Army, Red Cross, FEMA, local emergency officials and other relief groups use Twitter to send instant messages (called tweets) about evacuations and shelter information. And FEMA and DHS partnered with Facebook and MySpace so users can get emergency broadcast warnings and stay updated on friends and families displaced by storms. Social media is also a great way to post photos and videos using tools like Flickr, Facebook, Vine and Instagram.

Things to avoid:

- **bad weather** - leave early enough so you're not trapped
- **shortcuts** - may be blocked -- stick to the recommended Evacuation routes
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines**

Review tips on basic needs - Make sure you review tips on SHELTER LIVING, USING HOUSEHOLD FOODS, WATER PURIFICATION and SANITATION OF HUMAN WASTE at end of this section to prepare your family for the unexpected.



# What are YOU gonna do about...

## A FLOOD?

Floods are the most common natural disaster. Some floods develop over a period of several days, but a flash flood can cause raging waters in just a few minutes. Mudflows are another danger triggered by flooding that can bury villages without warning, especially in mountainous regions.

Everyone is at risk from floods and flash floods, even in areas that seem harmless in dry weather. Always listen to the radio or TV to hear the latest updates. Some other types of radios are the NOAA Weather Radio and Environment Canada Weatheradio with battery backup and tone-alert feature that alert you when a Watch or Warning has been issued.

### **BEFORE A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):**

Prepare - Review FLOOD MITIGATION at beginning of this Section.

Learn the buzzwords - Learn the terms / words used with floods...

- **Flood watch** - flooding is possible
- **Flash flood watch** - flash flooding is possible so move to higher ground if in a low-lying area
- **Flood warning** - flooding is occurring or will occur soon so listen to radio or TV for updates or evacuation alerts
- **Flash flood warning** - flash flood is occurring so seek higher ground on foot immediately
- **Urban and Small Stream Advisory** - flooding of small streams, streets and low-lying areas is occurring

Learn risks - Ask local emergency management office if your property is a flood-prone or high-risk area and what you can do to reduce risks to your property and home. Find out what official flood warning signals are and what to do when you hear them. Ask if there are dams or levees nearby and if they could be hazards. (*also see Landslides & Mudflows on pages 39-41.*)

Be ready to evacuate - Listen to local authorities and leave if you are told to evacuate. (*see EVACUATION*)

Make a plan - Review Section 1 to develop a **Family Emergency Plan** and **Disaster Supplies Kit**. And download Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium's "Flood Recovery Booklet" to learn how to dry materials like artwork, books, photographs, etc. at [www.iowaconserveandpreserve.org](http://www.iowaconserveandpreserve.org)

Learn to shut off - Know where and how to shut off electricity, gas and water at main switches and valves -- and ask local utilities for instructions.

Get insurance...? - Talk to your agent and find out more about the **National Flood Insurance Program**. (see *FLOOD MITIGATION*)

### **Did you know...**

- ... you can buy federal flood insurance through most major insurance companies and licensed agents?!
- ... you do not have to own a home to have flood insurance as long as your community participates in the **NFIP**?!
- ... **NFIP** offers coverage even in flood-prone areas and offers basement and below ground level coverage?!

Put it on film/chip/drive - Either videotape or take pictures of home and personal belongings and store them in a safe place with important papers.

## **DURING A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):**

Be aware - Listen to local news and watch for flash floods especially if near streams, drainage channels, and areas known to flood. Be prepared to fill and place sandbags in areas as instructed to help combat rising waters.

Get to higher ground - If in a low-lying area, move to higher ground.

Prepare to evacuate – (see *EVACUATION*), and IF time also...

- Secure home and move important items to upper floors.
- Turn off utilities at main switches or valves if instructed by authorities and **DO NOT** touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water!
- Fill up your car with fuel.

Obey warnings - If road signs, barricades, or cones are placed in areas - **DO NOT** drive around them! Find another way or you may get fined.

### Things to avoid:

- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) of moving water can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooding car** - if flood waters rise around your car, get out and move to higher ground if you can do it safely
- **bad weather** - leave early enough so you're not trapped
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous in floods!!

## AFTER A FLOOD (OR HEAVY RAIN):

### Things to avoid:

- **flood waters** - avoid since they may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage or may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines - local authorities will say when it's okay to return
- **moving water** - 6 inches (15 cm) can knock you off your feet and 2 ft (0.6 m) can float a car
- **flooded areas** - roadways and bridges may be washed-out
- **downed power lines** - extremely dangerous and report them to the power company

Obey warnings - If road signs, barricades, or cones are placed in areas - OBEY THEM! Most areas fine people who ignore posted warnings. DO NOT drive around barricades... find another way to get there!

Strange critters - Watch out for snakes and other wildlife in areas that were flooded. Don't try to care for a wounded critter since it may try to attack you... call your local animal control office or animal shelter.

Flooded food - Throw away food that has come into contact with flood waters since eating it can make you sick.

Drinking water - Wait for officials to advise when water is safe to drink. If you have a well that gets contaminated, find another source or boil water.

Wash your hands - Wash hands often with clean water and soap since flood waters are dirty and full of germs!

Use bleach - The best thing to use for cleaning up flooded areas is household bleach since it helps kill germs.

Sandbags - If any sandbags come into contact with floodwaters, wear rubber gloves when removing them and follow officials' instructions on where to discard them since they're most likely contaminated.

Listen - Continue listening to radio or TV for updates on weather and tips on getting assistance for housing, clothing, food, etc.

Insurance - Call your insurance agent or representative to discuss claims.

Mold - Consider asking a restoration professional to inspect your house for mold. (see *AIR QUALITY MITIGATION*)

Recovery tips - See TIPS ON RECOVERING FROM A DISASTER.

# What are YOU gonna do about...

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS?

Chemical plants are one source of hazardous materials, but there are many others that exist in large industry, small businesses, and homes. There are about 500,000 products that could pose a physical or health hazard -- things ranging from waste produced by a petroleum refinery to materials used by the dry cleaners to pesticides stored in your home.

Most hazardous materials are transported around the country by road, rail and through pipelines potentially causing spills on highways, near railroad tracks or underground. Many U.S. communities have a **Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)** that keeps local planners, companies and members of the community informed of potential risks. All companies that have hazardous chemicals must report to the LEPC every year and the public is encouraged to get involved. We [the public] should all learn more about hazardous materials and how they can affect our lives so contact your emergency management office to learn more.

We're going to cover two topics here -- **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DISASTER** (where a spill or incident affects an area or community) and **HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES** (how to handle products and react if there's an emergency in the home). Also, please review the **TERRORISM** topic since it covers several chemical and biological agents that are also classed as "hazardous materials".

### **BEFORE A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DISASTER:**

Learn the buzzwords - Ask your local officials about emergency warning procedures and terms...

- **Outdoor warning sirens or horns** - ask what they mean and what to listen for
- **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** - information and alerts via TV and radio
- **"All-call" telephoning** - an automated system for sending recorded messages via telephone
- **Residential route alerting** - messages announced from vehicles equipped with public address systems (loud speakers on top of car or van)

Learn risks - Ask Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), Emergency Management Office, or Fire Department about community plans for responding to a hazardous materials accident at a plant or a

transportation accident involving hazardous materials. Ask about the Emergency Planning and Community Right To Know Act (or EPCRA) and help your community become better informed.

Make a plan - Use LEPC's or agency's information to determine if your family is at risk (especially people living close to freeways, railroads, or factories which produce or transport toxic waste). And review Section 1 to develop a **Family Emergency Plan** and **Disaster Supplies Kit**.

Take a tour - LEPCs sometimes visit facilities that produce or transport toxic waste and include community groups, local officials and the media.

Pick a room - It could take authorities time to determine what the hazardous material is (if any) so pick a room in advance that your family could use as "shelter-in-place" if told to stay indoors for several hours. It's best to pick an internal room where you could block out air, if instructed to do so. To save critical time consider measuring, cutting and labeling plastic sheets in advance for each opening (vents, windows, and doors). Remember, toilets / drains are vented meaning outside air comes in constantly or when flushed / open (depends on design) - in case you're using bathroom as safe room.

Calculate air for room - Keep in mind people can stay in a sealed off room for only so long (or you'll run out of air.) FEMA suggests 10 square feet of floor space per person (like 5ft x 2ft / 1.5m x 0.6m ) will provide enough air to prevent carbon dioxide buildup for up to 5 hours.

Be ready to evacuate - Listen to local authorities and leave if you are told to evacuate. (*see EVACUATION*)

## **DURING A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DISASTER:**

Call for help - If you see a hazardous materials accident, call 9-1-1, local emergency number, or the fire department.

Listen - Keep radio or TV tuned in for more information, especially if you hear a warning signal... and stay calm!

**IF INDOORS** – If instructed to stay inside, prepare to "shelter-in-place"...

- Close windows, vents, and fireplace dampers and turn off A/C or heat and fans to reduce air drawn in from outside.
- Keep a radio with you at all times.
- Grab **Disaster Supplies Kit** and get to a closed off room.
- Seal gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels or plastic and duct tape (see above tips on picking a room and calculating air!)

**IF OUTDOORS** - Stay upstream, uphill, or upwind from the disaster since hazardous materials can be carried by wind and water quickly. Try to get at least 1/2 mile or kilometer away or as far away as possible!

**IF IN A VEHICLE** - Close your windows and shut off vents to reduce risk.

Stay away - Get away from the accident site to avoid contamination.

Evacuate...? - If told to leave... DO it! If officials say you have time, close windows, shut vents and turn off attic fans. (*see EVACUATION*)

What to wear - Keep your body fully covered and wear gloves, socks and shoes. (Even though these may not keep you totally safe, it can help.)

Things to avoid:

- **chemicals** - spilled liquid materials or airborne mists
- **contaminated food or water** - don't eat or drink food or water that may have been exposed to hazardous materials

## **AFTER A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DISASTER:**

Don't go there - Do not return home until local authorities say it is safe.

Air out - Open windows, vents and turn on fans in your home.

Listen - Keep up with local reports from either the radio or TV.

Clean up - A person, critter or item that has been exposed to a hazardous chemical could spread it.

- **decontamination** - follow instructions from local authorities since it depends on the chemical. May need to rinse off or may be told to stay away from water - check first!
- **strange symptoms** - if unusual symptoms show up, get to a hospital or medical expert right away. Remove contaminated clothing and put on fresh, loose, warm clothing and listen to local reports on the radio.
- **store clothes & shoes** - put exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers/bags without touching other materials and ask local authorities how to get rid of them
- **tell people you've been exposed** - tell everyone who comes in contact with you that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance
- **land and property** - ask authorities how to clean area

Strange vapors or danger - Report any strange vapors or other dangers to the local authorities immediately.

To learn more about hazardous materials, check out the Programs under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Emergency Management at [www.epa.gov/emergencies](http://www.epa.gov/emergencies) ... or visit the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration at <http://phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat>

Or visit Environment Canada at [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca) ... or the Canadian Transport Emergency Centre of the Department of Transport at [www.tc.gc.ca/canutec/](http://www.tc.gc.ca/canutec/)

## **BEFORE A HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL EMERGENCY:**

Learn risks - Call your local public health department or the Environmental Protection Agency for information about hazardous household materials. And check out the National Library of Medicine's Household Products Database that provides information on over 15,000 common household products and their potential health effects at <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/>

Read labels - Always read product labels for proper use, safe storage and disposal of chemicals.

Recycle it? - Call your local recycling center or collection site to ask what chemicals can be recycled or dropped off for disposal -- many centers take things like car batteries, oil, tires, paint or thinners, etc.

Store it - Keep all chemicals and household cleaners in safe, secure locations out of reach of small children.

Put it out - Don't smoke while using household chemicals.

## **DURING A HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL EMERGENCY:**

Call for help - Call your local Poison Control Center (or 1-800-222-1222), 9-1-1, fire department, hospital or emergency medical services. If possible, have container handy since medical professionals may need specific data from label.

First aid tips - Follow instructions on label and see Basic First Aid tips for POISONING in Section 3.

# What are YOU gonna do about... AN EMERGENCY?

Everyone should know what to do in an emergency. You should know who to call and what care to provide. Providing care involves giving first aid until professional medical help arrives.

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is a network of police, fire and medical personnel, as well as other community resources. People can help EMS by reporting emergencies and helping out victims until EMS can arrive.

During a major disaster, EMS groups will become swamped so if the public is prepared to handle some types of emergencies then we can help some of the victims until EMS arrives.

Your role in the EMS system includes the following things:

- BE AWARE...** Realize this is an emergency situation -- you could be putting yourself in danger!
- BE PREPARED...** Know how to handle the situation.
- HAVE A PLAN!** Check **ABCs...**, call 9-1-1 (or call for an ambulance) and help victim, if possible.

## TIPS ON THE ABCs... AIRWAY, BREATHING & CIRCULATION

In an emergency, you need to check the victim for **ABCs...**

- Airway.** Open the airway by tilting the head back, gently lifting the jaw up, and leaving mouth open.
- Breathing.** Place your ear over victim's mouth and nose. Look at chest, listen, and feel for breathing for 3 to 5 seconds.
- Circulation.** Check for a pulse using fingertips (not your thumb) in the soft spot between throat and the muscle on the side of the neck for 5-10 seconds.

*Note: For **heart** emergencies when doing CPR, the steps are now **CAB!***



# TIPS ON MAKING YOUR “EMERGENCY ACTION” PLAN

1. **BE AWARE...** Make sure it’s safe to approach area and victim.

Use your senses...

**Listen** for cries for help; screams; moans; explosions; breaking glass; crashing metal; gunshots; high winds; popping, humming or buzzing noises; lots of coughing, etc.

**Look** for broken glass; open medicine cabinet, container or bottle near victim; smoke; fire; vapors or mist; downed power lines, etc.

**Watch** for signs like trouble breathing; trouble talking; grabbing at throat or chest; pale or blue color in face, lips or ears; lots of people covering mouth or running away, etc.

**Smell** smoke or something burning; strong odors or vapors (leave if odor is too strong), etc.

**Feel** something burning your eyes, lungs or skin, etc.

2. **BE PREPARED...** The best thing you can do is **STAY CALM...** and **THINK** before you act!

Any time there’s an emergency or disaster, most people are scared or confused and many don’t know what to do. Take a few seconds and breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth to help slow your heartbeat and calm down. Always ask if you can help... either ask the victim or people around who may be helping.

3. **HAVE A PLAN!** Check **ABCs**, call 9-1-1 and help victim, if possible.

... Check victims’ **ABCs... Airway, Breathing, & Circulation**  
(Note: For **heart** emergencies, the steps are now **CAB!**)

... call 9-1-1, 0 for Operator or local emergency number for an ambulance (see tips on next page)

... help the victim, if possible -- and **STAY** until help arrives.

Before giving first aid, you must have the victim’s permission. Tell them who you are, how much training you’ve had, and how you plan to help. Do not give care to someone who refuses it - unless they are unable to respond.

## TIPS ON CALLING 9-1-1 FOR AN AMBULANCE

Whenever there is an emergency, use the following tips to help decide if you should call 9-1-1 (or local emergency number) for an ambulance.

### Call if victim...

- ... is trapped
- ... is not responding or is passed out
- ... is bleeding badly or bleeding cannot be stopped
- ... has a cut or wound so bad and deep that you can see bone or muscles
- ... has a body part missing or is torn away
- ... has pain below the rib cage that does not go away
- ... is peeing, pooping or puking blood (called passing blood)
- ... is breathing weird or having trouble breathing
- ... seems to have hurt their head, neck or back
- ... is jerking uncontrollably (called having a seizure)
- ... has broken bones and cannot be moved carefully
- ... acts like they had a heart attack (chest pain or pressure)

If you call 9-1-1 there may be a recording or delay while your call is being processed. DO NOT HANG UP -- wait for a 9-1-1 dispatcher.

### When you talk to 9-1-1 or the emergency number...

- ... try to stay CALM and describe what happened and what is wrong with the victim
- ... give the location of the emergency, your name and the phone number you are calling from
- ... follow their instructions in case they tell you what to do for the victim
- ... do NOT hang up until the 9-1-1 operator tells you to.

## TIPS ON REDUCING THE SPREAD OF GERMS OR DISEASES

Whenever you perform first aid on anyone, there is always a chance of spreading germs or diseases between yourself and the victim. These steps should be followed no matter what kind of first aid is being done -- from very minor scrapes to major emergencies -- to reduce the risk of infection.

### BE AWARE...

- ... Try to avoid body fluids like blood or urine (pee).
- ... Cover any open cuts or wounds you have on your body since they are doorways for germs!

### BE PREPARED...

- ... Wash your hands with soap and water before and after giving first aid.
- ... Have a first aid kit handy, if possible.
- ... Put something between yourself and victim's body fluids, if possible ...
  - blood or urine - wear disposable gloves or use a clean dry cloth
  - saliva or spittle – use a disposable Face Shield during Rescue Breathing
- ... Clean up area with household bleach to kill germs.

### ... and... HAVE A PLAN!

- ... see *TIPS ON MAKING YOUR "EMERGENCY ACTION" PLAN* two pages back.

## TIPS ON GOOD SAMARITAN LAWS

The definition of a "Samaritan" is a charitable or helpful person. Most states have Good Samaritan laws that were designed to protect citizens who try to help injured victims with emergency care. If a citizen uses "logical" or "rational" actions while making wise or careful decisions during an emergency situation then they can be protected from being sued.

To learn more about your state's Good Samaritan laws, check with your local library, search the web or contact an attorney.

# What are YOU gonna do about... CHOKING?

## Things to watch for...

- Trouble breathing
- Coughing or choking for several minutes
- Gripping the throat with one or both hands
- High-pitched wheezing
- Bluish color of skin, lips, fingertips/nails, and earlobes

**ATTENTION:** There are TWO separate “What to do...” parts here... one for ADULTS & CHILDREN (below) and one for INFANTS (see next page)!

## What to do... for ADULTS & CHILDREN (*Children over age 1*)

- Tell victim to try and cough it out. Ask “are you choking?” If victim nods yes, tell him/her you are going to help.
- Stand behind victim, wrap your arms around him/her and place your fist (thumb side in) just above victim’s belly button well below the breastbone.
- Grab the fist with your other hand and give quick, upward thrusts into their abdomen.
- Continue giving thrusts until the object is coughed out and victim can breathe, cough or talk or until he/she stops responding or passes out.

## If ADULT or CHILD stops responding or passes out:

- Yell for help, check breathing, and position victim on a flat surface so you can begin CPR (30 compressions and 2 breaths) - or do Hands-only CPR - to help force object out.
- Find hand position in center of chest over breastbone  
FOR ADULTS – see illustration 3-1 on page 190  
FOR CHILDREN – see illustration 3-2 on page 191
- Begin chest compressions:  
ADULTS – Using **both** hands, compress chest 30 times.  
CHILDREN – Using **one** hand, compress chest 30 times.
- Check mouth for object after every set of 30 compressions then give 2 rescue breaths (if doing). After 5 sets, call 911.
- Continue doing 30:2 sets until victim moves, coughs or talks or help arrives.

### **What to do... for INFANTS (Newborn to age 1)**

- If infant stops breathing, have someone call an ambulance.
- Turn infant face down on your forearm and support its head with that hand -- hold at angle so it's head is lower than chest. (May want to brace arm holding infant against your thigh.)
- Give 5 back blows between infants' shoulder blades with the heel of your other hand.
- If no object comes out, turn infant over so it is facing up on your forearm (still at an angle so head lower than chest) -- use your **first two fingers** to find the center of the breastbone on infant's chest.
- Give 5 thrusts to infant's chest using **only 2 fingers!** (Each thrust should be 1½ inches [3.81 cm] deep!)
- Repeat steps until infant can breath, cough, or cry or until he/she stops responding or passes out.

### **If INFANT stops responding or passes out:**

- Place infant on a firm, flat surface above ground (like on a table or counter) so you can begin Infant CPR.
- Yell for help and check infant's breathing.
- Find finger position in center of chest over breastbone [*see illustration 3-3 on page 192*]
- Using **2 fingers only**, compress chest 30 times.
- Open the airway and check mouth for object(s). If you see it, take it out.
- Give 2 breaths ... and remember, cover both mouth and nose on Infants!
- Repeat giving sets of 30 compressions and 2 rescue breaths, checking the mouth for objects. After 5 sets, call 911 (if they haven't already been called).
- Continue doing 30:2 sets until infant starts to respond or help arrives.

# What are YOU gonna do about...

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES?

The immune system is a complex network of cells, tissues, and organs that work together to defend the body against attacks by foreign invaders such as bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi. Because the human body provides an ideal environment for many microbes, they try to break in. It is the immune system's job to keep them out or, failing that, to seek out and destroy them.<sup>9</sup> But if a person's immune system is weak or damaged, germs and infection can settle in, leading to illness or possibly death.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, infectious diseases are the leading cause of death worldwide. And with air travel and international trade, infectious microbes are carried across borders every day by humans, animals, insects and contaminated foods.

Some "old" diseases like malaria, Ebola and measles are found in certain parts of the world, but "new" diseases like HIV/AIDS and West Nile are spreading around the globe. Plus every year there's some form of influenza and the common cold that spreads and affects people.

There are many infectious diseases so we chose a few you may have heard of before (**flu**, **Ebola**, **MERS**, **C. diff** and **staph**). We briefly describe each illness, then summarize "How they spread" and "What to do" for all of them with links at the end. Educate yourself about I.D.s and listen to officials for advice on how to protect yourself and your loved ones.

**Influenza (flu)** is a respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus that affects millions of people each year. Flu causes about 250,000 - 500,000 deaths worldwide every year, and a major outbreak (called a pandemic) could increase the death toll dramatically. The best way to prevent the flu is to boost your immune system and get vaccinated, esp people with weakened immune systems. There are several antivirals approved for treatment.

There are 3 types of flu viruses: A, B, and C. Influenza A viruses can infect humans and mammals (including pigs, horses and seals) but wild birds are the natural host. Typically, wild birds don't get sick but A viruses can be deadly to domestic chickens and turkeys. Influenza B viruses are normally found only in humans and generally don't cause severe widespread illness, while Influenza C viruses cause mild illness in humans.

Since strains can mutate or cross over to other species, it could lead to widespread illness and death. The worst influenza A outbreak was the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-1919 that may have killed up to 50 million people worldwide.

### Things to watch for flu (seasonal, avian, H1N1, etc.)...

**Possible symptoms** - fever (usually high), headache, sore throat, cough, runny nose, body aches, weakness, diarrhea or puking (more common in children)

**Possible complications** - bacterial pneumonia (lung inflammation), shortness of breath or severe breathing problems, eye infections (avian flu), pneumonia, hospitalization or death

According to a recent worst-case scenario outlined by the World Bank, a flu pandemic of avian or other origin could kill more than 70 million people worldwide and lead to a “major global recession” costing more than \$3 trillion.<sup>10</sup> Several vaccines and antivirals are available for treatment, however when a new influenza A virus emerges, a pandemic can occur.

**Ebola virus** species was discovered in 1976 in the Congo near the Ebola River. Since then, outbreaks have appeared sporadically in Africa. Ebola is a severe, often fatal disease in humans and primates and one of numerous Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (read more about VHF's on page 101). There is a lot of misinformation with this latest outbreak so we encourage you to please visit the Ebola websites listed on page 199 to learn more.

**MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)** is a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus called “Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus” (MERS-CoV). Normally these viruses cause mild to moderate respiratory symptoms (like a cold) but have been linked to pneumonia. The CDC says the incubation period for MERS is 2 to 14 days. So far about 30% of people with MERS died and currently there is no vaccine available.

### Things to watch for (MERS)...

**Possible symptoms** - fever, cough, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, diarrhea, nausea / puking

**Possible complications** - pneumonia, kidney failure or death

**C. diff (Clostridium difficile or C. difficile)** is a toxin-producing bacterium that causes diarrhea and more serious conditions like colitis (inflammation of the colon). There are many different strains and most are easily treated. However, a mutated strain called NAP1 (or O27 or BI strain) makes about 20 times more toxins so symptoms are much more severe. And now NAP1 is starting to show signs of becoming drug-resistant.

Experts estimate C. diff sickens about 500,000 Americans a year and the rate of infection grows by about 10% each year. One out of five people who get the infection will get it again, and recurrences can be more severe or

even deadly. Unfortunately *C. diff* spores can survive on most surfaces for months, and most hospital cleaners won't kill it, but a solution of bleach and water could. Also, alcohol-based hand sanitizers used in many health facilities do not work so staff, patients and visitors must wash hands with soap and water frequently to reduce spreading the infection.

### Things to watch for (*C. diff*)...

**Mild symptoms** - watery diarrhea (at least three times a day for 2 or more days with no blood in your poop), possible cramping or minor abdominal pain or tenderness

**Severe symptoms** - watery diarrhea 10 to 15 times a day, abdominal cramping and pain, fever, blood or pus in poop, nausea / pukey, dehydration, loss of appetite, weight loss

*Note: Not all cases of diarrhea are C. diff, but if you have it several times a day for 2 or more days, see your doctor immediately.*

**Staph (*staphylococcus aureus*)** are bacteria about a third of the population carries on their skin or in their nose. Bacteria can enter the body through a cut, bite or wound and may cause infection. Some strains of staph have become drug resistant (called methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* or **MRSA**). According to the CDC, staph bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the U.S. Most infections are minor (like a pimple, bump or boil) and can be treated with antibiotics. However, it can quickly turn into deep, painful abscesses that require surgical draining. Sometimes the bacteria remain confined to the skin, but they can also penetrate into the body, causing potentially life-threatening infections in bones, joints, surgical wounds, the bloodstream, heart valves and lungs.

Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most often in hospitals, nursing homes and facilities where people have weakened immune systems. MRSA also threatens police, firefighters and EMS workers, school kids and the community in general. In fact, the CDC reports MRSA is now killing more Americans each year than AIDS.

### Things to watch for (staph / MRSA)...

**Possible symptoms** - skin infection that may look like a pimple or boil and can be red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage

**Severe** - pneumonia, bloodstream or wound infections

### How infectious diseases spread...

Most infectious diseases are spread by close person-to-person contact primarily by touching people or things contaminated with bodily fluids (like pee, poop, sweat, droplets from sneezing, etc.) -- then touching your



eyes, nose, or mouth. Other diseases (like MRSA) can be spread by sharing personal items like towels or razors or by medical staff using contaminated items like stethoscopes or blood pressure cuffs. Keep in mind some bacteria or viruses can survive on objects for days, weeks or months.

### What to do to reduce the spread of infectious diseases...

- Wash hands often using soap and water or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol in it) to reduce the spread of germs. But keep in mind sanitizers don't work against some bugs so it's best to wash up.
- Tell healthcare workers and visitors to wash their hands before they touch you or your stuff -- don't be timid!
- If you have a fever, stay home! And wait 24 hours after fever breaks before you return to work or school.
- Use antibiotics only when absolutely necessary. Consider boosting your immune system to help fight infections.
- Sick people should cover mouth and nose with tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing, wash hands often, and wear a face mask around others (if very ill).
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered until healed.
- Clean counters, doorknobs, fixtures, phones, remotes, nurse call buttons, linens, etc. often with a bleach solution.
- Don't share silverware, razors, clothing, towels, or bedding and wash objects with soap and hot water.
- Follow doctor's instructions and limit activities outside home until fever and symptoms have gone away.

For more information, visit the following web sites ...

**Influenza / Flu:** [www.cdc.gov/flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/)      [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/)  
(all kinds)      [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)      [www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/)

**Ebola:** [www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/](http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/)      [www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/)

**MERS:** [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/MERS/](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/MERS/)

**C. diff:** [www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff\\_infect.html](http://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff_infect.html)  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/cdiff-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/id-mi/cdiff-eng.php)  
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/c-difficile/DS00736](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/c-difficile/DS00736)

**Staph:** [www.cdc.gov/mrsa](http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa)  
[www.mayoclinic.com/health/mrsa/DS00735](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mrsa/DS00735)

Or call CDC Hotline at 1-800-CDC-INFO or TTY: 888-232-6348. Also see some pandemic planning tips on pages 230-231

# What are YOU gonna do about...

## A STROKE?

According to the American Stroke Association, every 4 minutes someone dies of a stroke making it the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S. It also is a leading cause of adult disability. Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death to Canadians according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. And more women die of strokes each year than men in both countries.

A stroke (or “brain attack”) occurs when oxygen and vital nutrients carried by blood are cut off causing brain cells to die. It’s cut off because...

...a blood vessel is blocked in the neck or brain (by a blood clot or narrowing of an artery) -- called an **ischemic** [is-KEM-ik] stroke (*causes about 80% of strokes*)

... or ...

...a blood vessel bursts or leaks -- called **hemorrhagic** [hem-o-RAJ-ik] stroke or bleeder (*causes about 20% of strokes*)

**NOTE:** You only have 2 - 6 hours maximum to stop permanent brain damage from a stroke - so get to a hospital as quickly as possible (within 3 hours is best!)

### Things to watch for...

**Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding**

**Loss of muscle control on one side of the body**

**Loss of balance, stumbling, dizziness or fainting**

**Different sized pupils** (one pupil small / one enlarged)

**Severe headache**

**Blurred or double-vision in one or both eyes**

**Shock** (pale, cold or clammy, weak or rapid pulse, etc.)

**Transient ischemic attack (TIA / mini-stroke)** - a minor or warning stroke - risk of major stroke is high

### What to do...

- Call 9-1-1 for an ambulance.
- Get victim to lie back with head raised (put pillows or blankets under head and shoulders so partially sitting up).
- Loosen any tight or restrictive clothing.
- See if there are any other injuries.
- If victim is drooling or having problems swallowing, place them on their side to keep the airway open.
- Stay with victim until medical help arrives.

# APPENDIX A

## Citizen Corps / CERT

### (Volunteer Programs for Americans & Canadians)

#### WHAT IS CITIZEN CORPS?

**Citizen Corps** was created to help coordinate volunteer activities that make the nation's communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation. Citizen Corps is managed at local levels by Citizen Corps Councils, which bring together existing crime prevention, disaster preparedness, and public health response networks with the volunteer community and other groups.

#### CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAMS & PARTNERS

**Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs)** educate people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event and can take a more active role in preparing their community. The program is administered by DHS. Learn more at [www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams](http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams)

**Fire Corps** promotes the use of citizen advocates to enhance the capacity of resource-constrained fire and rescue departments at all levels: volunteer, combination, and career. Citizen advocates can assist local fire departments in a range of activities including fire safety outreach, youth programs, and administrative support. Fire Corps provides resources to assist fire and rescue departments in creating opportunities for citizen advocates and promotes citizen participation. Fire Corps is funded through DHS and is managed and implemented through a partnership between the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Visit [www.firecorps.org](http://www.firecorps.org)

**Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** strengthens communities by helping medical, public health and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year as well as during local emergencies and other times of community need. MRC volunteers work in coordination with existing local emergency response programs and also supplement existing community public health initiatives, such as outreach and prevention, immunization programs, blood drives, case management, care planning, and other efforts. The MRC program is administered by the Department of Health & Human Services. Check out [www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

**National Neighborhood Watch** incorporates terrorism awareness education into its existing crime prevention mission, while also serving as a way to bring residents together to focus on emergency preparedness and emergency response training. The National Neighborhood Watch is administered by the National Sheriffs' Association. Learn more at [www.nnw.org](http://www.nnw.org)

**Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)** works to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. VIPS serves as a gateway to resources and information for and about law enforcement volunteer programs. Funded by DOJ, VIPS is managed and implemented by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. To learn more visit [www.theiacp.org/VIPS](http://www.theiacp.org/VIPS)

Citizen Corps **Affiliate Programs & Organizations** offer communities resources for public education, outreach, and training; represent volunteers interested in helping to make their community safer; or offer volunteer service opportunities to support first responders, disaster relief activities, and community safety efforts. Some Affiliates include:

The **American Radio Relay League (ARRL)** represents the interests of the more than 650,000 U.S. Radio Amateurs (or “HAMS”). Many amateurs have organized themselves under a formal structure to better provide public service and emergency communications like the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES). Learn more by visiting [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) or contact your local Emergency Management office.

**Civil Air Patrol** is a congressionally chartered, non-profit corporation and is the civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. CAP supports Homeland Security efforts by providing coastal patrol, air/ground observation, radio communications and relay, aerial reconnaissance, air-to-ground photography, radiological monitoring, and disaster and damage assessment assets. Learn more by visiting [www.gocivilairpatrol.com](http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com)

**National Association for Search and Rescue** is a non-profit membership association comprised of thousands of paid and non-paid professionals interested in all aspects of search and rescue throughout the United States and around the world. NASAR has trained over 30,000 responders since 1989 utilizing its internationally respected SARTECH© Certification Program. NASAR is dedicated to ensuring that volunteers (non-paid professionals) in search and rescue are as prepared as the career public safety personnel (fire, law and emergency medical services) with whom they work on a daily basis. Learn more at [www.nasar.org](http://www.nasar.org).

Some other Affiliates include The American Legion, Home Safety Council, National Safety Council, National Voluntary Organizations Active in

Disaster (NVOAD) and many others. To learn more about **Citizen Corps** or to check if there's a local council in your community, please visit [www.ready.gov/citizen-corps](http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps).

## MORE ABOUT CERT

In the United States and Canada, the **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** program helps train volunteers to assist first responders in emergency situations in their communities. CERT members give critical support to first responders in emergencies, provide immediate assistance to victims, organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site, and collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts.

The CERT course is taught in the community by a trained team of first responders who have completed a CERT Train-the-Trainer course conducted by their state training office for emergency management, or FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. CERT training includes disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, basic disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue operations and is usually delivered in 2-1/2 hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7 week period.

FEMA's online "Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams", IS 317, is an independent study course that serves as an introduction to CERT for those wanting to complete training or as a refresher for current team members. It has six modules with topics that include an Introduction to CERT, Fire Safety, Hazardous Material and Terrorist Incidents, Disaster Medical Operations, and Search and Rescue. It takes between six and eight hours to complete the course. The IS 317 can be taken by anyone interested in CERT. However, to become a CERT volunteer, one must complete classroom training offered by a local government agency such as the emergency management agency, fire or police department. To learn more, visit <https://training.fema.gov/emcourses> and search 317

For more information about CERT or to check if a CERT is in your community, visit [www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams/](http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams/) ... or visit [www.cert-la.com](http://www.cert-la.com) (click on "Other CERT Program Links") ... or call your local, state, provincial, or territorial Emergency Management Office to ask about volunteer opportunities.

Or visit your local or state / provincial web site to learn about other types of volunteer groups in your area and get involved!

## END NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> U. S. Department of Commerce, NOAA, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, Tropical Atmosphere Ocean, “Frequently Asked Questions about El Niño and La Niña”, ([www.pmel.noaa.gov/tao/elnino/faq.html](http://www.pmel.noaa.gov/tao/elnino/faq.html)), 2004.
- <sup>2</sup> NOAA News Online (Story 2317), “NOAA Announces the Return of El Niño”, ([www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2004/s2317.htm](http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2004/s2317.htm)), September 10, 2004.
- <sup>3</sup> NOAA “Answers to La Niña frequently asked questions”, ([www.elnino.noaa.gov/lanina\\_new\\_faq.html](http://www.elnino.noaa.gov/lanina_new_faq.html)), May 3, 2001.
- <sup>4</sup> Katherine McIntire Peters, “Congress questions Homeland Security’s approach to nuclear detection”, Government Executive.com, ([www.govexec.com/story\\_page\\_pf.cfm?articleid=41058](http://www.govexec.com/story_page_pf.cfm?articleid=41058)), September 25, 2008.
- <sup>5</sup> Adam Entous, “Bush Signs Measure Boosting U.S. Bioterror Defenses” (Reuters online, June 12, 2002).
- <sup>6</sup> John Markoff, “Before the Gunfire, Cyberattacks”, The New York Times, ([www.nytimes.com/2008/08/13/technology/13cyber.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/13/technology/13cyber.html)), August 13, 2008.
- <sup>7</sup> Centers for Disease Control Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response, Agents, Diseases, & Threats, Radiation Emergencies, Information for the Public, “Dirty Bombs”, ([www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/dirtybombs.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/dirtybombs.asp)), July 28, 2003.
- <sup>8</sup> Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, “WASH Facts and Figures”, ([www.wsscc.org](http://www.wsscc.org)), Geneva, Switzerland, 2002.
- <sup>9</sup> National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, “NIAID Overview: Immune System Research”, ([www.niaid.nih.gov/facts/overview.htm](http://www.niaid.nih.gov/facts/overview.htm)), June 23, 2004.
- <sup>10</sup> Michelle Fay Cortez and Jason Gale, “Baxter Sent Bird Flu Virus to European Labs by Error (Update 2)”, Bloomberg ([www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601202&sid=aTo3Lbhca75I](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601202&sid=aTo3Lbhca75I)), February 24, 2009.
- <sup>11</sup> U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Issues Center, Homeland Security & Defense, Pandemic Planning, ([www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com)), 2006.

## RESOURCES

- About.com. “Top 50 Emergency Uses for Your Camera Phone” by Paul Purcell, (Excerpted from [www.disasterprep101.com](http://www.disasterprep101.com)), August 2008.
- American Dental Association. Manage Your Oral Health, “Dental Emergencies & Injuries”, [www.ada.org/public/manage/emergencies.asp](http://www.ada.org/public/manage/emergencies.asp), 03/14/05.
- American Heart Association. *2005 Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care, Currents Winter 2005-2006*, November 2005.
- American Heart Association. *Hands-Only CPR simplifies saving lives for bystanders*, April 2008.
- American Heart Association. *Heartsaver CPR AED Student Workbook*, March 2011.
- American Medical Association. Journals of the AMA, JAMA Consensus Statement, *Tularemia as a Biological Weapon Medical and Public Health Management*, Chicago, IL, 2001.
- American Red Cross. *American Red Cross Standard First Aid*, Washington, D.C.: The American National Red Cross, 1988.
- American Red Cross. *Community First Aid & Safety*, Washington, D.C.: The American National Red Cross, 1998.
- American Red Cross. *Coping With Disaster – Emotional Health Issues for Victims*, Washington, D.C.: The American National Red Cross, 1991.

# INDEX

## A

- activated charcoal, first aid uses for, 17, 163
- active shooter
  - how to respond, 235-237
  - training and resources, 237
- air pollution, ozone alerts, 51
- air quality
  - improving with HEPA filter, 27, 229
  - mitigation tips, 27
- American Red Cross. *See also* Canadian Red Cross
  - about, 210
  - assistance following disasters, 146
  - business continuity information, 232
- amputation, emergency measures, 170
- anthrax (biological agent)
  - about, 95
  - how spread, 95
  - signs and symptoms of exposure, 95
  - treatment, 96
- asthma attack, first aid treatment, 171
- avalanches. *See also* landslides
  - basics, 37
  - facts and figures, 3
  - safety information, 37-39
- avian flu (bird flu). *See also* flu
  - reducing the spread of infectious diseases, 198-199
  - symptoms, 197
  - where to get more information, 199

## B

- baking soda
  - first aid uses for, 17
  - paste for insect bites or stings, 163
  - paste for rash, 202
  - paste for sea critter sting, 166
  - soak for sunburn, 176
  - use to put out small grease or oil fire, 53
- bedding, items to include in disaster supplies kit, 19-20
- biological agents, 78. *See also* terrorism
  - about, 94-104
  - basic groups of, 94
  - how used in an attack, 94
  - safety information, 78, 94-104
    - after an attack, 103-104

**BE AWARE... BE PREPARED... and HAVE A PLAN!**  
*This book may save your life!*

**Is your family or business *really* prepared for  
a disaster or emergency?**

**Look inside to see how to ...**

- **Protect your family and property from natural disasters;**
- **Prepare for Chem / Bio, cyber, or nuclear threats;**
- **Make a Family Emergency Plan with tips for kids, elderly and special needs family members, and pets;**
- **Assemble "Grab & Go" kits for home, car and office;**
- **Plan for shelter, water purification, food preparation, and sanitation;**
- **Apply basic first aid if help is not readily available;**
- **Develop a Business Continuity Plan**

**... plus find many resources and much more!**

As a firm believer in both preparedness and education, I find this book to be an invaluable resource for all ages. This book is a wonderful aid on how to prepare and provide for yourself and your loved ones during times of need.

*-- Howard Pierpont, MBCI CBM CBCP CRP  
Board Chair, DERA [www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org)*

This book is a must have for every home. USFRA, in partnership with local charitable organizations and businesses, dispenses books every year.

*-- Captain Traycee Biancamano, CEO,  
U.S. First Responders Association [www.usfra.org](http://www.usfra.org)*

**\$14.99 U.S.**

