

## Emergency Preparedness for pet owners

If you are like millions of animal owners nationwide, your pet is an important member of your household. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire or flood, tornado or terrorist attack depends largely on emergency planning done today. Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an animal emergency supply kit and developing a pet care buddy system, are the same for any emergency. Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you will need to make plans in advance for your pets. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets.

Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer.

Visit us online at [www.iocc.org/emergency](http://www.iocc.org/emergency) for the Pet Owners Preparedness guide to help you get ready.



### Suggestions and REMINDERS

Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the Disaster Supplies Kit in the trunk of your car.

- Keep items in airtight plastic bags.
- Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh.
- Rotate your stored food every six months.
- Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.



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## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

### What is emergency preparedness all about?

The Department of Homeland Security, together with local organizations across the country, is working hard to strengthen our nation's ability to respond to emergencies. More than ever, it is important that all of us be prepared for possible emergencies. Natural or man-made disasters can strike without warning, at any time and anywhere.

The likelihood of you and your family surviving a house fire depends as much on having a working smoke detector and an exit strategy, as on a well-trained fire department. The same is true for surviving a terrorist attack or other emergency. While there is no way to predict what will happen, or what your personal circumstances will be, there are simple things you can do now to prepare yourself and your loved ones. We must have the tools and plans in place to make it on our own, at least for a period of time, no matter where we are when disaster strikes. Just like having a working smoke detector, preparing for the unexpected makes sense. Get ready now.

There are four steps that we should all take to help provide for the safety and security of ourselves and our loved ones in the time of an emergency. Look inside for more information or visit us online at [www.iocc.org/emergency](http://www.iocc.org/emergency).



### SUPPLIES

There are six basics you should stock in your home: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies and special items.

Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container.

**Possible containers include:**



large, covered trash container



camping backpack



duffle bag

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# IOCC®

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**There are four steps that we should all take to help provide for the safety and security of ourselves and our loved ones in the time of an emergency.**

## Step 1: Get a Kit of Emergency Supplies



When disaster strikes, local "911" emergency services may be temporarily overwhelmed and unable to reach everyone immediately. Local officials and relief workers may not be

able to help you for hours or even days. Be prepared to survive on your own for at least three days, during an emergency, maybe longer. You should prepare a kit of emergency supplies now to help you survive until help arrives or until it is safe to go outside. You won't have time to shop once a disaster hits—or in the case of a chemical or radiological disaster, it may be unsafe to go outside.

Start now by gathering basic emergency supplies — fresh water, food, a flashlight, battery-powered radio, a NOAA Weather radio with tone alert, extra batteries, a first aid kit, toilet articles, prescription medicines and other special things your family may need. Use the enclosed pamphlet prepared by the American Red Cross and the Department of Homeland Security to help you assemble all the items that you many need.

Visit [www.iocc.org/emergency](http://www.iocc.org/emergency) and download the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit to help your family maintain financial stability during and after an emergency. This kit is a simple tool that helps you to identify and organize key financial records and provides a quick reference file for your most important financial documents.

Consider putting together two kits. In one, put everything needed to stay where you are and make it on your own. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

## Step 2: Make a Plan for What You Will Do in an Emergency



Be prepared to assess the situation, use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and your loved ones. Depending on your circumstances and the

nature of the disaster, the first important decision is deciding whether to stay where you are or to evacuate to a safer area. You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

**Staying Put:** There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "shelter-in-place," can be a matter of survival. Choose an interior room or one with as few windows and doors as possible. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents. Each

piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits.

If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to "shelter-in-place." Quickly bring your family and pets inside, lock doors, and close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers. Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet for instructions.

**Getting Away:** Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency. If you have a car, keep at least a half tank of gas in it at all times. Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation out of your area. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. Take your emergency supply kit and lock the door behind you. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with your windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off. Listen to the radio for instructions.

**Develop a Family Communications Plan:** Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-state contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

Visit [www.iocc.org/emergency](http://www.iocc.org/emergency) and download the Family Communication Plan guide to help you develop a plan for your family.

**At Work and School:** Think about the places where your family spends time: school, work and other places you frequent. Talk to your children's schools and your employer about emergency plans. Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. If you are an employer, be sure you have an emergency preparedness plan. Review and practice it with your employees. A community working together during an emergency also makes sense. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.

## Step 3: Be Informed about what might happen



Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency. However there are important differences among potential ter-

rorist threats that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. Call your local Red Cross chapter to find out what types of emergencies are most likely to occur in the areas where you live and work. Then contact the IOCC U.S. Programs Department (toll free: 1-866-803-4622) for more detailed information on how to react in those emergencies.

You may be aware of some of your community's risks: others may surprise you. Historically, flooding is the nation's single most common natural disaster. Flooding can happen in every U.S. state and territory. Earthquakes are often thought of as a West Coast phenomenon, yet 45 states and territories in the United States are at moderate to high risk from earthquakes and are located in every region of the country. Other disasters may be more common in certain areas. Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms and can happen anywhere. However, states located in "Tornado Alley," as well as areas in Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and Florida are at the highest risk for tornado damage. Hurricanes are severe tropical storms that form in the southern Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and in the eastern Pacific Ocean. Scientists can now predict hurricanes, but people who live in coastal communities should plan what they will do if they are told to evacuate.

Talk to your children openly about being prepared for emergencies and staying calm during times of crisis. Include your children in all of your family communication plans and practice home-escape drills. Your children can also visit the Department of Homeland Security's "Ready Kids" website where they can learn more about disasters and play interactive emergency preparedness games online. Visit <http://www.ready.gov/kids>

Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act. With some simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.

## Step 4: Get involved



Being prepared for emergencies starts with you, but it also takes everyone working together to make our communities safer. We all have a role to play in keeping our hometowns secure from emergencies of all kinds. Your local officials work hard to help people prepare, train and could use your help as a volunteer.

You can provide valuable assistance to local fire stations, law enforcement, emergency medical services and emergency management. Get connected to disaster volunteer groups such as the American Red Cross or through your local Citizen Corps Council, so that when something happens, you can help in an organized manner.

Visit [www.citizencorps.com](http://www.citizencorps.com) to learn more. Through your local Red Cross chapter, you can receive training in various first aid skills, emergency volunteer services. You can also donate blood, which is of vital importance during an emergency.

### IOCC® Family Communications Plan

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Out-of-Town-Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Neighborhood Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting Place Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dial 9-1-1 for Emergencies!**

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