Home Safety checklist & Preparing for emergencies

Affinity Health Care

Making Every Moment Matter

FAMILY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS and RESPONSE PLAN

Following is a plan template that is intended to give you a format and possible suggestions about information you might want to include in a family disaster plan. It is not all inclusive and should be modified as needed. You should adapt this plan to your own specific needs or requirements.

Keep this plan updated with current and correct information.

NOTE: *It is important to store this document in a secure location to reduce the risk of losing personal information that could lead to possible identity theft and fraud.*

In addition, this document should be stored in a water tight container and in electronic format.

Household Members

Household Members	Relation/Birthdate	Social Security

Pets	Pet Rabies Vaccination #	Vet Name and Number

Your home care nurse or social worker will assist you / your family in registering with the Texas State Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) who can assist during an emergency. In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, remember to dial 2-1-1 for news, assistance, and resources. If you would not like to be registered for services through 2-1-1, please let your hospice nurse or social worker know your preference.

TEXAS Health and Human Services | 2·1·1 TEXAS Connecting People and Services

Household Information

Home Address:					
Phone 1:			Phone 2:		
E-mail 1:					
E-mail 2:					
Car Information:					
Car 1:	Make	Model	Year		
Car 2:	Make	Model	Year	License #	
Car 3:	Make	Model	Year	License #	
Emergency					
CALL 911 FOR EMERGENCY					
Doctor #1:					
Doctor #2:					
Doctor #3:					
Fire Number:					
Police Number:					
Ambulance Number:					
Poison Control Number:					
Hospital Emergency Room Number:					
Name/Number:					
Name/Number:					

Note: After a disaster, 911 may not be working. Use these numbers as you listed above.

Contacts

Utility and Service Contacts		
Organization Name **Water/ Sewer**	Address	Contact
	Note	Phone
Organization Name **Electric**	Address	Contact
	Note	Phone
Organization Name **Gas**	Address	Contact
	Note	Phone
Organization Name **Phone/Cable**	Address	Contact
	Note	Phone
Organization Name **Home Medical**	Address	Contact
	Note	Phone

Insurance/Other Information (Health, Auto, Home and Life)		
Name	**Policy #/Other Information**	**Phone**

Contacts, cont.

Name	Address/Physical Location to Home	Phone	E-mail Address	Cell Phone Number

Note: Identify two neighbors. Agree to check on each other.

Out- of-Area Contact #1			
Name	Home Address	Home Phone	E-mail Address
	Work Address	Work Phone	Cell Phone Number

Out- of-Area Contact #2			
Name	Home Address	Home Phone	E-mail Address
	Work Address	Work Phone	Cell Phone Number

Important: During disasters, use the phone for emergencies only. Local phone lines may be tied up. Make one call out-of-area to report to a loved one that you are safe. Let this person contact others family members or friends on your behalf.

Contacts, cont.

Work, School, and Other Contacts		
Household Member Name	Work/School/Other	Disaster Procedure*
	Address	
	Phone	
Household Member Name	Work/School/Other	Disaster Procedure*
	Address	
	Phone	
Household Member Name	Work/School/Other	Disaster Procedure*
	Address	
	Phone	
Household Member Name	Work/School/Other	Disaster Procedure*
	Address	
	Phone	
Household Member Name	Work/School/Other	Disaster Procedure*
	Address	
	Phone	

*Note: * Disaster Procedures: Household members should know each other's disaster procedures for work, school, or other places where they spend time during the week.*

Procedures

Reunion Procedures	
In or Around House/Apartment	Inside House/Apartment
	Outside House/Apartment
When Family is Not Home	Priority Location (Leave note in a designated place where you will be: i.e., neighbor, relative, park, school, shelter, etc.)

Note: Identify and discuss with household members the reunion places if a disaster prevents anyone from entering the home. Also, reunion and evacuation procedures need to include children at school and house members with disabilities. Talk to school officials. Write down procedures.

Important Notes and Procedures

Note: People with disabilities are advised to identify two or three people at work, school, neighborhood, etc., who will assist them in the event of a disaster. In addition, please contact your local department of social services, local office on aging, and local office of disabilities to discuss registering your specific need (DIAL 211).

Medication List

User's Name	Medication Name	Dosage/Frequency	Reason for Taking
Doctor	Prescription #	Date Started/Ending	Location of Medicine
User's Name	Medication Name	Dosage/Frequency	Reason for Taking
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User's Name	Medication Name	Dosage/Frequency	Reason for Taking
Doctor	Prescription #	Date Started/Ending	Location of Medicine

Note: Keep on hand at least seven days of vital medications and supplies. Talk to doctor before storing medication or if you use two or more medications. Take them with you if you have to evacuate to a shelter, friend's house, or other family members.

LIST UPDATED: _____ LIST UPDATED: _____

LIST UPDATED: _____ LIST UPDATED: _____

LIST UPDATED: _____ LIST UPDATED: _____

Pharmacy / Doctors / Specialists

Pharmacist Name(s)	**Pharmacy Name**	**Phone/Address**
	Pharmacy Name	**Phone/Address**
Specialist Name	**Area of Concern**	**Phone**
	Organization	**Address**
Specialist Name	**Area of Concern**	**Phone**
	Organization	**Address**
Allergies to Medications	**Person's Name**	**Person's Name**
	Medication	**Medication**
Health/Disability Information		
Special Needs, Equipment, and Supplies		

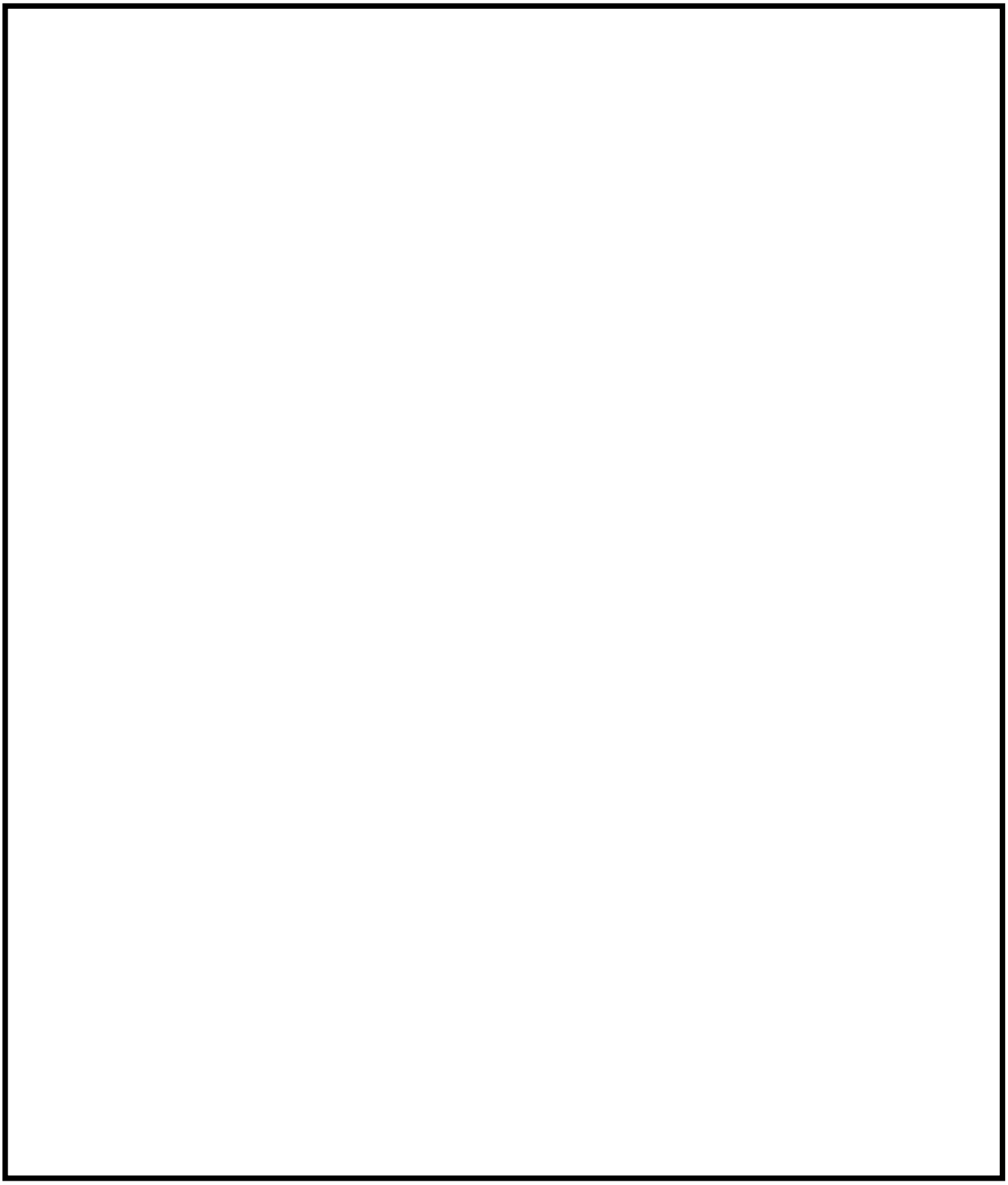
Note: Fill this and all sections out in pencil. Update regularly.

Pharmacy / Doctors / Specialists, cont.

Allergies to Medications	**Person's Name**	**Person's Name**
	Medication	**Medication**
Health/Disability Information		
Special Needs, Equipment, and Supplies		
Allergies to Medications	**Person's Name**	**Person's Name**
	Medication	**Medication**
Health/Disability Information		
Special Needs, Equipment, and Supplies		

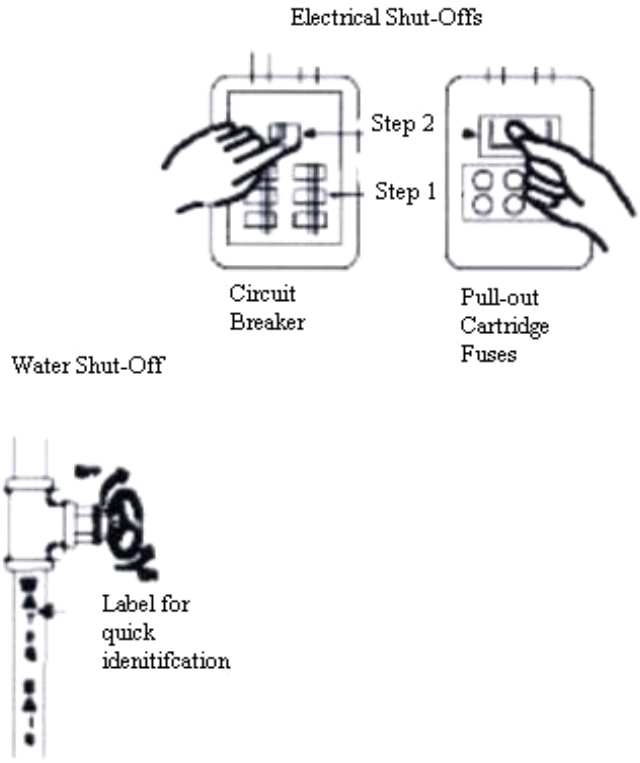
Last Update for Pharmacy/Doctors/Specialists: *Date:* _____

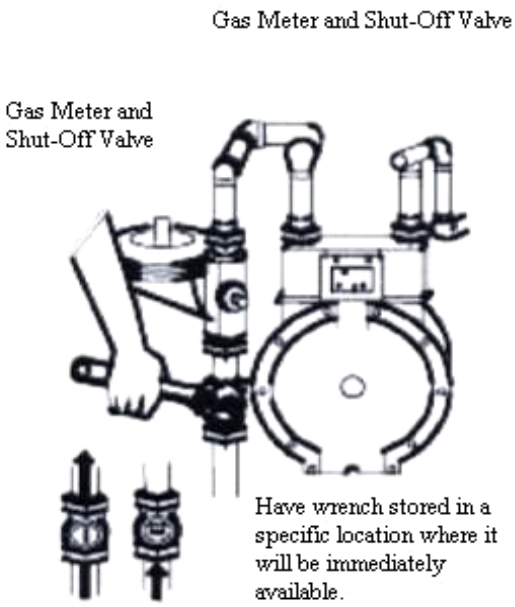
Home Layout Diagram



Draw a layout of your home. Make sure you include locations of utility shut-offs and safety equipment like fire extinguishers, disaster supplies, evacuation plans, etc.

Utility Control





Electricity:

In the event that you need to turn off the electricity in your house, go to the breaker box and do the following:

1. Turn off smaller breakers one by one.
2. Flip the “main” breaker last.

To re-energize your home, reverse the steps above.

Water:

In the event you need to shut water off inside your home, find the main water valve and turn it to your right. To open the flow of water back into the house, turn it to your left.

Gas:

IMPORTANT - Only turn off your gas at the meter if you smell gas!

To turn off natural gas in your house, take a wrench and tighten it on to the quarter turn valve that is on the pipe that feeds into the gas meter. Turn it one quarter turn to make the indicator parallel to the ground. In most locations, once you do this you cannot turn the gas back on to the house without the utility company.

Propane:

If you live in an area that uses outdoor propane or LPT you will find this outside the home. Open the top of the tank and you will see either a regular turn knob or a quarter turn valve. Turn the knob to your right to shut off the flow of propane into your house. For quarter turn valve see above.

Shelter in Place Disaster Supply Kit

- Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days

- Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days
  - Non-perishable packaged or canned food/juices
  - Foods for infants or the elderly
  - Snack foods
  - Non-electric can opener
  - Cooking tools/fuel
  - Paper plates/plastic utensils

- Blankets/Pillows, etc.

- Clothing - seasonal/rain gear/sturdy shoes

- First Aid Kit/Medicines/Prescription Drugs

- Special Items - for babies and the elderly

- Toiletries/Hygiene Items/Moisture Wipes

- Flashlight/Batteries

- Radio - Battery operated and NOAA weather radio

- Cash (with some small bills)
  - Banks and ATMs may not be open or available for extended periods.

- Keys

Other Sources of Information

FEMA

1-800-621-FEMA (3362)
www.fema.gov/

Red Cross

www.redcross.org

TX Dept. Aging & Disability Services

www.dads.state.tx.us/hurricane/index.cfm

Texas Evacuation Routes
www.txdps.state.tx.us

Assistance with Evacuation—211
www.211texas.org/211/
Www.unitedway.org

Important numbers to contact after a disaster:
FEMA _____
Local Social Services _____

Home Safety Checklist

Prevention is the best approach to safety. The National Safety Council states that four million serious accidents happen in the home each year. Periodic room-by-room checks are recommended. Agency staff will assess the home and inform the patient or family on recommendations to increase safety. Check appropriate areas of need.

Fall and Other Injury Prevention Checklist

Wear well-fitting shoes with non-skid soles. Use a cane walker if you need to.

Have good lighting and use night lights in hallways, bathrooms and stairways.

Have grab bars installed in bathrooms and handrails on stairs.

Keep stairways and passageways free of clutter.

Remove throw rugs.

Wipe up spills promptly.

Have your vision and hearing checked regularly and wear your glasses or hearing aid if you need them.

Don't wear loose or long clothing that can cause tripping when standing on a ladder or step stool.

Let your doctor know right away if you are dizzy, weak, or unsteady.

Avoid rushing to the bathroom. If you feel you need to rush, try going at frequent, scheduled times or consider using a bedside commode.

Bathroom Safety Checklist

Make sure that electrical appliances (such as hair dryers, radios, shavers, heaters, etc.) are not placed where they can fall into the bathtub or come in contact with water.

Install grab bars on the side of the bathtub.

Use a skid-resistant bath mat by the tub or shower.

Have a special container for used razor blades and other sharp objects. Don't toss them into the wastebasket.

Don't store medications in the bathroom. Instead, keep them in a closet or another dry cool place

Poison Prevention Checklist

□ Label all poisons.

□ Keep all substances in their original containers.

□ Store cleaning agents away from food and medications.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Place all needles and syringes, or other sharp objects, in a hard plastic or metal container with a screw top or re-enforced top with heavy duty type tape.

Place soiled bandages, disposable pads/sheets and medical gloves, masks and gowns in securely fastened plastic bags before placing them in the garbage can with other trash.

Oxygen (02) and Medical Gases Safety

Store medical gas cylinders on their sides in a stable protected area (protected from heat extremes.)

Use O_2 in an area free from smoking materials such as cigarettes or cigars; open flames such as gas stoves, candles, fire place; and electrical medical equipment with frayed cords.

Post signs to warn visitors that oxygen is in use and they should not smoke.

Do not use petroleum based products near oxygen flow, i.e., Vaseline on lips/nose

Look in the back of this booklet for a "No Smoking" sign you can remove and post near the entrance to the patient's living space.

Hand Hygiene

Good handwashing is the single most important step in preventing the spread of infections.

Hand Hygiene With Soap And Water:

- Wet hands and wrists with warm water.
- Apply soap and rub palms together to work up lather.
- Rub briskly for 15 seconds.
- With hands placed in a downward position, clean all surface areas of hands:
- Between fingers, around and under nails, and wrists
- Rinse thoroughly
- With hands held upright, dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- While washing, try to prevent clothing (e.g. shirt cuffs) from getting damp or wet.

Respiratory Hygiene

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

Put your used tissue in the waste basket.

Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing using the hand hygiene described above.

Avoid contact with people who have influenza-like symptoms.

Ask people to use a tissue and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and to wash their hands afterwards.

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Emergency Preparedness & Response to Potential Disasters

Floods

If a flood is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or television for information.
- Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons, and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.
- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If flood waters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

Hurricanes

If a hurricane is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or TV for information.
- Secure your home, close storm shutters, and secure outdoor objects or bring them indoors.
- Have emergency supplies: nonperishable ready-to-eat food, drinking water, flashlight, battery operated radio, and batteries.
- Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

You should evacuate under the following conditions:

- If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
- If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure - such shelters are particularly hazardous during hurricanes no matter how well fastened to the ground.

- If you live in a high-rise building - hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.
- If you live on the coast, on a floodplain, near a river, or on an inland waterway.
- If you feel you are in danger.

If you are unable to evacuate, go to your wind-safe room. If you do not have one, follow these guidelines:

- Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors.
- Close all interior doors - secure and brace external doors.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm - winds will pick up again.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.

Tornadoes

Be alert to changing weather conditions.

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or to commercial radio or television newscasts for the latest information.
- Look for approaching storms.
- Look for the following danger signs:
  - Dark, often greenish sky
  - Large hail
  - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
  - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
  - If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.
- If you are under a tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately!
- Go to an interior room- one without windows- such as a bathroom or closet.
- Cover yourself with a mattress or cushions.

High Temperatures / Heat

The following are guidelines for what you should do if the weather is extremely hot:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun.
- Stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
- Use a fan if air conditioning is not available. Circulating air can cool the body by increasing the perspiration rate of evaporation.
- Consider spending the warmest part of the day in public buildings such as work, libraries, movie theaters, malls, schools, and other community facilities.

- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Drink plenty of water. Persons who have epilepsy or heart, kidney, or liver disease; are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- Limit intake of caffeine and alcoholic beverages.
- Dress in loose-fitting, lightweight, and light-colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in extreme heat, and take frequent breaks.

Winter Storms and Cold

To winterize your car, attend to the following:

- Battery and ignition system should be in top condition and battery terminals clean.
- Ensure antifreeze levels are sufficient to avoid freezing.
- Ensure the heater and defroster work properly.
- Check and repair windshield wiper equipment; ensure proper washer fluid level.
- Ensure the thermostat works properly.
- Check lights and flashing hazard lights for serviceability.
- Check for leaks and crimped pipes in the exhaust system; repair or replace as necessary.

The following are guidelines for what you should do during a winter storm or under conditions of extreme cold:

- Listen to your radio, television, or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.
- Have a battery operated radio, flashlight or lantern, and a supply of batteries.
- Keep an emergency supply of ready-to-eat food and a supply of drinking water.

- If you must go outside, dress for the weather. Wear layers of clothes, with a wind- and water-resistant layer on the outside, cover your head, and wear gloves or mittens. Take frequent breaks to a void overexerting yourself in the cold.
    - Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack, a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going out
    - Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.

- Watch for signs of hypothermia. These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first, and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.

- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, consider the following:
  - Travel in the day, don't travel alone, and keep others informed of your schedule.
  - Stay on main roads; avoid back road shortcuts.
- Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping your residence cooler than normal.

  Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.

Fire

- Install smoke alarms. Properly working smoke alarms decrease your chances of dying in a fire by half.
- Place smoke alarms on every level of your residence and office.
- Test and clean smoke alarms once a month. Replace smoke alarms once every 10 years.
- Review escape routes with your family. Practice escaping from each room.
- Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut. Make sure security gratings on windows have a fire safety opening feature so they can be easily opened from the inside.
- Consider escape ladders if your residence has more than one level, and ensure that burglar bars and other anti-theft mechanisms that block outside window entry are easily opened from the inside.
- Teach family members to stay low to the floor (where the air is safer in a fire)

  when escaping from a fire.
- Clean out storage areas. Do not let trash, such as old newspapers and magazines, accumulate.
- Never use gasoline, benzine, or similar flammable liquids indoors.
- Store flammable liquids in approved containers in well-ventilated storage areas.
- Never smoke near flammable liquids.
- Be careful when using alternative heating sources.
- Keep a screen in front of the fireplace.
- Have heating units inspected and cleaned annually by a certified specialist.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, away from children, and, if possible, in a locked cabinet.
- Never smoke in bed or when drowsy or medicated.

- Have the electrical wiring in your residence checked by an electrician.
- Inspect extension cords for frayed or exposed wires or loose plugs.
- Make sure outlets have cover plates and no exposed wiring.
- Make sure wiring does not run under rugs, over nails, or across high-traffic areas.
- Do not overload extension cords or outlets. If you need to plug in two or three appliances, get a UL-approved unit with built-in circuit breakers to prevent sparks and short circuits.
- Make sure insulation does not touch bare electrical wiring.
- Sleep with your door closed.
- Install A-B-C-type fire extinguishers in your residence and teach family members how to use them.
- Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your residence.

During a fire, if your clothes catch on fire, you should:

- Stop, drop, and roll - until the fire is extinguished. Running only makes the fire burn faster.

To escape a fire, you should:

- Check closed doors for heat before you open them. If you are escaping through a closed door, use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame before you open it. Never use the palm of your hand or fingers to test for heat - burning those areas could impair your ability to escape a fire.
- Crawl low under any smoke to your exit - heavy smoke and poisonous gases collect first along the ceiling.

Landslides

Landslides occur when masses of rock, earth, or debris move down a slope. Debris flows, also known as mud-slides, are a common type of fast-moving landslide that tends to flow in channels.

Landslides are caused by disturbances in the natural stability of a slope. They can accompany heavy rains or follow droughts, earthquakes, or volcanic eruptions. Mudslides develop when water rapidly accumulates in the ground and results in a surge of water-saturated rock, earth, and debris. Mudslides usually start on steep slopes and can be activated by natural disasters. Areas where wildfires or human modification of the land have destroyed vegetation on slopes are particularly vulnerable to landslides during and after heavy rains.

If a landslide is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or watch TV for warnings about intense rainfall or for information and instructions from local officials.
- Be aware of any sudden increase or decrease in water level on a stream or creek that might indicate debris flow upstream. A trickle of flowing mud may precede a larger flow.
- Look for tilted trees, telephone poles, fences, or walls, and for new holes or bare spots on hillsides.

- Listen for rumbling sounds that might indicate an approaching landslide or mudflow.
- Be alert when driving. Roads may become blocked or closed due to collapsed pavement or debris.
- If landslide or debris flow danger is imminent, quickly move away from the path of the slide. Getting out of the path of a debris flow is your best protection. Move to the nearest high ground in a direction away from the path. If rocks and debris are approaching, run for the nearest shelter and take cover (if possible, under a desk, table, or other piece of sturdy furniture).

Volcanoes

Volcanoes can produce ash, toxic gases, flash floods of hot water and debris called lahars, lava flows, and fast-moving flows of hot gases and debris called pyroclastic flows. Some dangers from volcanoes can be predicted ahead of time while others may occur with little or no notice after an eruption. Each volcano and situation is unique. Learn more about volcanic eruptions and pay attention to warnings from local authorities for the best advice available on specific actions you can take to stay safe.

- Be prepared either to shelter or to evacuate. Develop an evacuation plan and a sheltering plan for yourself, your family, and others in your household. Review the plans and make sure that everyone understands them.

You can do many things to protect yourself and your family from the dangers a volcanic eruption can cause:

- You should leave the area immediately. If you are warned to evacuate because an eruption is imminent, evacuate.
- If you can drive rather than walk, use your vehicle to evacuate. When driving keep doors and windows closed, drive across the path of danger if you can or away

  from the danger if you can not, and watch for unusual hazards in the road.
- If you are indoors close all windows, doors, and fireplace or woodstove dampers.

  Turn off all fans and heating and air conditioning systems. Bring pets and livestock into closed shelters.
- If you are outdoors seek shelter indoors. If caught in a rockfall, roll into a ball to protect your head.
- If near a stream or river, be aware of rising water and possible mudflows in low-lying areas. Move up-slope as quickly as possible.
- Seek care for burns right away. Immediate care can be life saving.
- If your eyes, nose, and throat become irritated from volcanic gases and fumes, move away from the area immediately. Your symptoms should go away when you are no longer in contact with the gases or fumes. If the symptoms continue, consult your doctor.

Tsunamis

The force of some tsunamis is enormous. Large rocks weighing several tons along with boats and other debris can be moved inland hundreds of feet by tsunami wave activity. Homes and other buildings are destroyed. All this material and water move with great force and can kill or injure people.

Tsunamis that strike coastal locations in the Pacific Ocean Basin are most always caused by earthquakes. These earthquakes might occur far away or near where you live. Some tsunamis can be very large. In coastal areas their height can be as great as 30 feet or more (100 feet in extreme cases), and they can move inland several hundred feet. All low-lying coastal areas can be struck by tsunamis.

A tsunami consists of a series of waves. Often the first wave may not be the largest. The danger from a tsunami can last for several hours after the arrival of the first wave. Tsunamis can move faster than a person can run. Sometimes a tsunami causes the water near the shore to recede, exposing the ocean floor.

Tsunamis can occur at any time, day or night. Tsunamis can travel up rivers and streams that lead to the ocean.

- In general, if you think a tsunami may be coming, the ground shakes under your feet or you hear there is a warning, tell your relatives and friends, and move quickly to higher ground. Move in an orderly, calm and safe manner to the evacuation site or to any safe place outside your evacuation zone. Follow the advice of local emergency and law enforcement authorities.

Earthquakes

Minimize your movements during an earthquake to a few steps to a nearby safe place. Stay indoors until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

If you are indoors

- Take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or bench or against an inside wall, and hold on. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- Stay in bed, if you are there when the earthquake strikes. Hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall.

In that case, move to the nearest safe place

- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, loadbearing doorway.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Most injuries during earthquakes occur when people are hit by falling objects when entering into or exiting from buildings.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.
- DO NOT use the elevators. If you are outdoors stay there.

Thunderstorms and Lightning

The following are facts about thunderstorms:

- They may occur singly, in clusters, or in lines.
- Some of the most severe occur when a single thunderstorm affects one location for an extended time.
- Thunderstorms typically produce heavy rain for a brief period, anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour.
- Warm, humid conditions are highly favorable for thunderstorm development.
- About 10 percent of thunderstorms are classified as severe - one that produces hail at least three-quarters of an inch in diameter, has winds of 58 miles per hour or higher, or produces a tornado.

The following are facts about lightning:

- Lightning's unpredictability increases the risk to individuals and property.
- Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.
- Heat lightning is actually lightning from a thunderstorm too far away for thunder to be heard. However, the storm may be moving in your direction!
- Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months during the afternoon and evening.
- Your chances of being struck by lightning are estimated to be 1 in 600,000, but could be reduced even further by following safety precautions.
- Lightning strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be attended to immediately.

The following are guidelines for what you should do if a thunderstorm is likely in your area:

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible).
- Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.
- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Shutter windows and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close window
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners.
- Use your battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio for updates from local officials.

Chemical Attack

Chemical agents are poisonous vapors, aerosols, liquids, and solids that have toxic effects on people, animals, or plants. They can be released by bombs or sprayed from aircraft, boats, and vehicles. They can be used as a liquid to create a hazard to people and the environment. Some chemical agents may be odorless and tasteless.

They can have an immediate effect (a few seconds to a few minutes) or a delayed effect (2 to 48 hours). While potentially lethal, chemical agents are difficult to deliver in lethal concentrations. Outdoors, the agents often dissipate rapidly. Chemical agents also are difficult to produce.

A chemical attack could come without warning. Signs of a chemical release include people having difficulty breathing; experiencing eye irritation; losing coordination; becoming nauseated; or having a burning sensation in the nose, throat, and lungs. Also, the presence of many dead insects or birds may indicate a chemical agent release.

The following are guidelines for what you should do in a chemical attack.

If you are instructed to remain in your home or office building, you should:

- Close doors and windows and turn off all ventilation, including furnaces, air conditioners, vents, and fans.
- Seek shelter in an internal room and take your disaster supplies kit.
- Seal the room with duct tape and plastic sheeting.

Hazardous Materials Incidents

If you are asked to evacuate do so immediately.

- If you are caught outside, stay upstream, uphill, and upwind!
- In general, try to go at least one-half mile (usually 8-10 city blocks) from the danger area.
- Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists, or condensed solid chemical deposits.

In a motor vehicle

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

If you are requested to stay indoors

- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows.
- Close vents, fireplace dampers, and as many interior doors as possible.
- Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems. In large buildings, set

  ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building. If this is not possible, ventilation systems should be turned off.
- Go into the pre-selected shelter room. This room should be above ground and have the fewest openings to the outside.
- Seal the room by covering each window, door, and vent using plastic sheeting and duct tape.

Nuclear Power Plant Emergency

The following are guidelines for what you should do if a nuclear power plant emergency occurs.

- Keep a battery-powered radio with you at all times and listen to the radio for specific instructions.
- Close and lock doors and windows.
- Turn off the air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace, and other air intakes.
- Go to a basement or other underground area, if possible.
- Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.

If you expect you have been exposed to nuclear radiation:

- Change clothes and shoes.
- Put exposed clothing in a plastic bag.
- Seal the bag and place it out of the way.
- Take a thorough shower.
- Keep food in covered containers or in the refrigerator. Food not previously covered should be washed before being put in to containers.

Epidemic or Pandemic

What is an epidemic?

An epidemic occurs when an infectious disease spreads rapidly to many people. For example, in 2003, the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic took the lives of nearly 800 people world-wide.

By their very nature, disease outbreaks can occur at unexpected times and places and may grow rapidly in scale. They also attract considerable attention from the public, media and government agencies. Outbreaks have the potential to severely disrupt community life. They are not isolated events but happen within existing social, cultural, political and economic settings.

Epidemics and other crises cause power failures, food shortages, contaminated water, and technological breakdowns. Staying alive in such circumstances is incredibly difficult, but can be done with the right information.

The basic general lines of action during epidemics include – Preparedness and Interventions (investigations). Success in dealing with an epidemic depends largely on the state of preparedness

What is a pandemic?

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. HIV/AIDS is an example of one of the most destructive global pandemics in history.

A pandemic causes economic and social disruption due to high rates of illness and worker absenteeism. This is especially true if absenteeism affects key services such as transportation, communication, or power.

Here are a few things you can do:

- Plan ahead, in case services are disrupted. This is especially important if someone in your family has special needs. For example, make sure to have a way to fill needed prescriptions.
- See if you can work from home in the event of a pandemic.
- Plan home learning activities if school is closed.
- Store extra water, food, and supplies.
- Stay as healthy as you can by getting adequate rest, managing stress, eating right, and continuing to exercise.
- Assist seniors in your community.

For any given outbreak, guidance should be obtained through the local, state, and/or federal health department.

Foreign and Domestic Terrorism

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Move or leave if you feel uncomfortable or if something does not seem right.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior.
- Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended.
- You should promptly report unusual behavior, suspicious or unattended packages, and strange
- Learn where emergency exits are located in buildings you frequent. Plan how to get out in the event of an emergency.
- Be prepared to do without services you normally depend on - electricity, telephone, natural gas, gasoline pumps, cash registers, ATMs, and Internet transactions.

If there is an explosion, you should:

- During an explosion
    - Get under a sturdy table or desk if things are falling around you. When they stop falling, leave quickly, watching for obviously weakened floors and stairways. As you exit from the building, be especially watchful of falling debris.
    - Leave the building as quickly as possible. Do not stop to retrieve personal possessions or make phone calls.
    - Do not use elevators.
- Once you are out
    - Do not stand in front of windows, glass doors, or other potentially hazardous areas.
    - Move away from sidewalks or streets to be used by emergency officials or others still exiting the building.

Active Shooter

Upon discovery of an active shooter situation, as soon as possible and when safe to do so, notify law enforcement (911) and provide overhead announcement of an Active Shooter and location.

Response to an active shooter in the agency:

- Evacuate - If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.
- Hide Out - If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to be. To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place, lock the door and blockade the door with heavy furniture, if at all possible. Hide behind large items (i.e.,
- If evacuation and hiding out are not possible, remain calm, dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location. If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.
- As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, take action against the active shooter - attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:
    - Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her;
    - Throwing items and improvising weapons;
    - Yelling; and
    - Committing to your actions

The goal of law enforcement is to locate, isolate, and neutralize the shooter as quickly as possible to prevent

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Should there be an emergency or disaster in your community, who would you call? Be prepared. Make a plan. Stay informed.

COUNTY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

Angelina County	936-634-8731	angelinacounty.net/emergency/
Chambers County	409-267-2445	co.chambers.tx.us/page/emergency_mgmt
Cherokee County	903-683-5947	co.cherokee.tx.us/ips/cms/othercountyoffices/emergencymanagement.html
Hardin County	409-246-5200	co.hardin.tx.us/page/hardin.EMS
Houston County	936-544-7175	co.houston.tx.us/page/Houston/EMC.FireMarshall
Jasper County	409-994-2543	jnsem.net
Jefferson County	409-835-8757	co.jefferson.tx.us/em.htm
Liberty County	936-334-3219	co.liberty.tx.us/page/liberty. Emergency
Nacogdoches County	936-560-7841	co.nacogdoches.tx.us/departments/emergencymanagement.asp
Newton County	409-994-2453	jnsem.net
Orange County	409-882-7895	orangecoem.com
Panola County	903-692-2844	co.panola.tx.us/page/panola.Emergency
Polk County	936-327-6826	polkcountyOEM.com
Rusk County	903-657-8571	riskcountyOEM.org
Sabine County	409-994-2453	jnsem.net
San Augustine County	936-275-2762	co.san-augustine.tx.us/emergency.html
Shelby County	936-598-3664	co.shelby.tx.us
Trinity County	936-642-1746	co.trinity.tx.us/page/trinity.Emergency OperationsCoordinator
Tyler County	409-331-0874	co.tyler.tx.us/page/tyler.LocalEmergencyPlanningCommittee

OTHER RESOURCES

Dept. of Homeland Security	ready.gov/hurricanes
SETX Alerting Network (STAN)	877-THE-STAN
TX Dept. of Emergency Management	tdem.texas.gov
All Resources and Referrals	texas211.org
State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry	tdem.texas.gov/steer/

AFFINITY HEALTH CARE

Making Every Moment Matter

409-383-1400 or toll-free 877-383-1405