It’s important that you be prepared for possible disasters and other emergencies. Natural or human–caused disasters can strike suddenly, at anytime and anywhere. There are three actions you can take that can make a difference... Get Involved
Join other members of your community through the American Red Cross in taking these first steps. You never know how many people your actions will affect, how many lives people your actions will change. When you never know how many people your actions will affect, how many lives

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Get a Kit

Have at least three days of supplies in an easy–to–carry evacuation kit, with additional supplies on hand.

Remember to check your kit and replace the stock every six months.

An easy way to get your kit started is to contact your local Red Cross or go online to www.redcross.org to order an emergency preparedness kit today. If you purchase a kit or choose to build your own, check that it includes—

Water. Have at least one gallon per person per day.

Food. Pack non-perishable, high-protein items, including energy bars, ready-to-eat soup, peanut butter, etc. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking and little or no water.

Flashlight. Hand crank and alternative energy options are available. Include extra batteries, if applicable.

First aid kit. Include a first aid reference guide.

Medications. Don’t forget prescription and non-prescription items.

Radio. Include extra batteries or use a hand-crank radio.

Tools. Gather a wrench to turn off gas if necessary, a manual can opener, screwdriver, hammer, pliers, knife, duct tape, plastic sheeting and garbage bags and ties.

Clothing. Provide a change of clothes for everyone, including sturdy shoes and gloves.

Personal items. Remember copies of important papers, including identification cards, insurance policies, birth certificates, passports, etc.; eyeglasses, toiletries for each member of your household and neighbors and encourage them to remain, it is not safe for them.

Support your community. Include your pets. If you must evacuate, take your animals with you. If it is not safe for you to remain, it is not safe for them.

Support your community. If you remain, support your community and by giving blood. More than one million community and by giving Red Cross volunteers help people in emergencies. They translate for non-English speakers so that everyone can receive Red Cross services, teach first aid and CPR and in disasters by contacting your local Red Cross chapter to ask about first aid, CPR and disaster training. Learning simple first aid techniques can give you the skills and confidence to help when someone in your home, your neighborhood or workplace is injured.

When a major disaster occurs, your community can change in an instant. Loved ones can be hurt, and emergency response can be delayed. Make sure that at least one member of your household is trained in first aid and CPR and in how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). Disaster preparedness presentations will provide more specific information on how to prepare for disasters in your community.

Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for details.

 Share what you have learned with your family, household and neighbors and encourage them to be informed.

For more information, contact your local American Red Cross chapter, call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit www.redcross.org.

To give blood, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-5453) or visit www.givelife.org.

Make a Plan

Planning ahead will help you have the best possible response to disaster.

Talk. Discuss with your family the disasters that can happen where you live. Establish responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team. Designate alternates in case someone is absent. If a family member is in the military, also plan for how you would respond if they are deployed. Include the local military base resources that may be available.

Plan. Choose two places to meet after a disaster:
• Right outside your home, in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire.
• Outside your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate your neighborhood.

Learn. Each adult in your household should learn how and when to turn off utilities such as electricity, water and gas. Ask your local fire department to show you how to use a fire extinguisher.

Tell everyone in the household where emergency information and supplies are kept. Make copies of the information for everyone to carry with them. Keep the information updated.

Practice: evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on a map in case main roads are impassable or gridlocked.

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Be Informed

Know what may happen and how you can help.

Learn what disasters or emergencies may occur where you live, work, play or travel. These events can vary from those affecting only you and your family, like a home fire or medical emergency, to those affecting your entire community, like an earthquake or flood.

Identify how local authorities will notify you during a disaster and how you will get important information, whether through local radio, TV or NOAA weather radio stations or channels.

Learn what you can do to prepare for disasters by contacting your local Red Cross chapter to ask about first aid, CPR and disaster training. Learning simple first aid techniques can give you the skills and confidence to help when someone in your home, your neighborhood or workplace is injured.

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Share what you have learned with your family, household and neighbors and encourage them to be informed.

The three steps below can help you to react well in an emergency:
• Check the scene for safety and the victim for life-threatening conditions.
• Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number and request professional assistance.
• Care for the victim if you can reach the person safely.

American Red Cross Emergency Contact Card

1. Cut out the card along the dotted lines.
2. Write in the contact information for each household member, such as work, school and cell phone numbers. If you need additional space, use the back side of the card.
3. Fold the card so it fits in your pocket, wallet or purse.
4. Carry your card with you so it is available in the event of a disaster or other emergency when you will want to contact each other.

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