

Be Red Cross Ready

Evacuation Planning Checklist

In certain disaster situations it may be necessary to get out of the area completely or evacuate. Evacuations occur many times a year due to hurricanes, floods, wildfires, chemical spills and other disasters. Being prepared ahead of time by having a plan can make evacuation time less stressful and help to save lives.

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

- **Keep monitoring local radio, TV and the internet for updates.**
- **If local officials tell you to evacuate immediately, grab your emergency kit and go.**
- **If you have more time, prepare your home and check your emergency supplies.**

Planning for the possibility of evacuation



Preparing for an emergency before there is a threat of disaster will lessen stress and anxiety when it is time to take action.

Keep basic emergency supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can take with you in case you must evacuate.

- Water—one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply)
- Food—non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply)
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
- Multipurpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area

Make an evacuation plan that considers your household, children, pets and anyone else that you are responsible for.

This evacuation plan should include:

- A meeting place in case you are separated in an emergency and evacuation has been ordered. The meeting spot should be outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot return home.
- Routes to get to the meeting point, including alternate routes and modes of transportation.
- A communication plan for every household member, including children. Plan for the possibility that phone lines will be down. Make sure that everyone has an emergency contact card on hand.
- Clear division of responsibilities for each person (for example, who will grab the emergency kit and who will get the kids from school or daycare, etc.).
- Your car should have at least half a tank of gas as gas stations may be closed or out of fuel in an emergency.
- Consider your transportation needs if you do not have a car; make plans with a neighbor, friend or someone else that can easily get to you.

When evacuation is imminent



If you have time before leaving and local officials have not advised an immediate evacuation, prepare your home before evacuating.

Quickly take steps to protect your home and belongings. Depending on the threat, you should:

- Put your emergency preparedness kit in your vehicle or by the door if you are being picked up or may be leaving on foot.
 - In some disaster situations, such as tsunami or wild fire, it may be better to leave by foot than wait for transportation.
 - Carry what you can, selecting the items most essential to your health and safety.
 - Bring items you think you will need for a prolonged stay away from home.
- Tell your out-of-area contact person where you are going and when you expect to get there.
- Bring things indoors; lawn furniture, trash cans, children's toys, garden equipment, clotheslines, hanging plants and any other objects that may be blown around or swept away.
- Look for potential hazards, such as coconuts, unripened fruit and other objects in trees around your property that could blow or break off and fly around in strong winds. Cut these objects off and store them indoors until the storm is over.
- Turn off electricity at the main fuse or breaker and turn off water at the main valve.
- Leave natural gas on, unless local officials advise otherwise, because you will need it for heating and cooking when you return home. If you turn gas off, a licensed professional is required to turn it back on, and it may take weeks for a professional to respond.
- Turn off propane gas service valves. Propane tanks often become damaged or dislodged in disasters.

Immediate evacuation



If you have only moments before leaving, grab your emergency kit and go.

- Evacuate immediately if told to do so by authorities.
- Listen to a local radio or television station and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Leave as soon as possible, preferably in daylight. Evacuation will probably take longer than expected. Give yourself plenty of time.
- If an evacuation is ordered you should expect the following:
 - High volume of traffic on roads
 - Large amounts of people at airports, train stations, metro stations and other areas of public transportation
 - Possibility that cell phone calls will not go through due to high usage - texting may be easier
 - Many stores and businesses closed or out of products
 - ATMs out of cash
- If it is impossible for you to take your emergency preparedness kit, try to take the following:
 - First aid kit, including prescription medications, dentures, eyeglasses and hearing aid batteries as needed
 - A change of clothes and a sleeping bag or blankets for each household member
 - Flashlight, radio and water
 - Car keys and house keys
 - Cash and personal identification
 - Any pets that you can get without endangering yourself. It may be too dangerous to come back for them later.
- Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, and sturdy shoes. The most common injury following disasters is cut feet.
- Secure your home as you normally would when leaving for an extended period.
- Use travel routes specified by local officials. Since certain areas may be impassable or dangerous, avoid shortcuts.
- Unplug electronic devices and turn off all utilities except the natural gas (unless advised otherwise).
- Get in touch with your out-of-area contact person and let them know where you will be going and when you expect to get there.

Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community has experienced a disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site, available through [RedCross.org/SafeandWell](https://www.redcross.org/SafeandWell), to let your family and friends know about your welfare. You may also call **1-866-GET-INFO** to register yourself and your family.