It's important to prepare for possible disasters and other emergencies. Natural and human-caused disasters can strike suddenly, at any time and anywhere. There are three actions everyone can take that can help make a difference...Get a kit. Make a plan. Be informed.

Be Red Cross Ready Checklist

- I know what emergencies or disasters are most likely to occur in my community.
- I have a family disaster plan and have practiced it.
- I have an emergency preparedness kit.

- At least one member of my household is trained in CPR/AED use.
- I have taken action to help my community prepare.

Get a kit

At a minimum, have the basic supplies listed below.

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

- Water: one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Food: non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
- Multi-purpose 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)
- Current digital photos of loved ones, updated every six months, especially for children
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s)

Consider the needs of all family members and add supplies to your kit. Suggested items to help meet additional needs are:

- Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Games and activities for children
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Two-way radios
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Manual can opener

Additional supplies to keep at home or in your kit based on the types of disasters common to your area:

- Whistle
- N95 or surgical masks
- Matches
- Rain gear
- Towels
- Work gloves
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Household liquid bleach
- Entertainment items
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent

Make a plan

- Meet with your family or household members.
- Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play.
- Identify responsibilities for each member of your household and plan to work together as a team.
- If a family member is in the military or engages in extended business travel on a regular basis, plan how you would respond if they were away.
- If you or a member of your household is an individual with access or functional needs, including a disability, consider developing a comprehensive evacuation plan in advance with family, care providers and care attendants, as appropriate. Complete a personal assessment of functional abilities and possible needs during and after an emergency or disaster situation, and create a personal support network to assist.

Plan what to do in case you are separated during an emergency

- Choose two places to meet—
  1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire.
  2. Outside your neighborhood, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.

Consider any transportation challenges that might be encountered by individuals that use mobility assistive equipment.
• Choose an out-of-area emergency contact person. It may be easier to text or call long distance if local phone lines are overloaded or out of service. Everyone should memorize emergency contact information and have it in writing or programmed into their cell phones.

• Identify alternative ways to communicate (email, text, call, mail, through a third party, etc).

Plan what to do if you have to evacuate
• Decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there. You may choose to go to a hotel or motel, stay with friends or relatives in a safe location or go to an evacuation shelter if necessary.

This app provides expert advice on how to prepare and respond to disasters and includes a map with open Red Cross shelters.

• Have at least one alternate location if the preferred location is not accessible.

• Practice evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on your map in case roads are impassable. Ensure all household/family members know the evacuation route, alternate routes, primary and alternate meeting destination.

• Plan ahead for your pets. Keep a phone list of “pet friendly” motels/hotels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes.

Be Informed
Learn what disasters or emergencies may occur in your area. These events can range 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.

Get your cards online here or, go to redcross.org and search emergency contact.

Let Your Family Know You’re Safe
Tell your loved ones about the American Red Cross Safe and Well Website or access through redcross.org by searching safe and well. This internet-based tool should be integrated into your emergency communications plan. People within a disaster-affected area can register themselves as “safe and well” and concerned family and friends who know the person’s phone number or address can search for messages posted by those who self-register. If you don’t have internet access, call 1-800-RED CROSS to register yourself and your family.

For more information on disaster and emergency preparedness, visit redcross.org.