

Safety Note #168

MAKE A PLAN to Prepare for Emergencies

Emergency Preparedness Safety Note Series: Step 2 – Make a Plan

Note: This series of Safety Notes provides tips for personal emergency preparedness. Each UC ANR workplace should also have site specific emergency plans. See the [EH&S website](#) or your location's Safety Coordinator for more information about your workplace emergency plans.

Emergencies and Disasters can strike quickly and without warning. But taking a hit doesn't have to mean you are down for the count. Do you know what natural disasters your neighborhood is at risk for? Have you planned how to respond when a disaster strikes? What about man-made disasters in your region? Have you made a plan? The importance of being prepared can never be underestimated. The first step toward emergency preparedness is to Be Informed about what could happen and how to respond (Safety Note #167). A second step toward emergency preparedness is to **Make a Plan**.



NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH
Photo source: ready.gov

Make a Plan:

- Meet with your family or household members to 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.
- Identify the needs of household members and neighbors with special requirements or situations, such as use of a wheelchair, walking aids, special diets, or medication.
- Plan what to do in case you are separated during an emergency. Choose two places to meet: one right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency—such as a fire; and an alternate location outside your neighborhood—in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate.
- 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 have emergency contact information in writing or programmed into cell phones.
- Know the location of utility shutoffs and keep needed tools nearby. Know how to turn off the gas, water, and electricity to your home. Note: if you turn off gas or other utilities, make sure you know how to safely turn them back on or contact your utility provider after the emergency.
- Get training in how to properly use a fire extinguisher. Contact your local fire department or ANR EHS staff for training and resources.
- Plan what to do if you have to evacuate. Decide where you would go and what route you would take. Practice evacuating your home. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on your map in case roads are impassable.
- Try to keep your car's tank at least half-full or more so you are not caught short if you need to evacuate.
- Plan ahead for your pets. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels/motels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes.
- Keep copies of essential documents, such as identification, insurance policies and financial records in a secure, waterproof container, along with your disaster supplies kit. Include a household inventory (a list and photos or video of your belongings) for insurance purposes. Don't forget food and medications for your pets as well.
- Check with your city or county to see if there is a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program in your area. Participate and get involved.
- Gather an emergency supplies kit: Take time now to provide for your entire family. In addition to setting aside water and nonperishable food, gather a few essential emergency supplies such as flashlights and extra batteries, a battery-operated radio, candles and matches.

Before the next disaster, get together with your family or housemates to plan now what each person will do before, during, and after the event. Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how to contact one another; how to get back together; and what to do in different situations. Many government agencies, schools and business have plans for various types of disasters and emergencies. Your family should also have one! Be informed, make a plan. The safety and well-being of your loved ones are important, so take the time NOW to develop a family emergency plan.