

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **“What is emergency management?”**

Emergency Management is the planning, assignment and coordination of all available resources in a concatenated program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for an all-hazards approach to emergencies and disasters whether man-made, natural, or technological.

Emergency Management:

- Provides for the safety of our citizens because all possible hazards are identified by trained emergency managers who plan the steps that need to be taken before, during, and after an emergency of any type.
- Review and exercise the plans often to identify and correct problems.
- Educate and inform the public.
- Organize the correct response to an emergency or disaster.
- Work together with our neighbors, the State, and the Federal Government.

## **“What are the parts of emergency management?”**

- Mitigation-activities that are taken to prevent or reduce the occurrence of an emergency or risk to human life and property. This may include: building codes, disaster insurance, public education, procurement of equipment, and identification of resources.
- Preparedness-actions taken prior to an emergency to facilitate a coordinated response. This may include: Continuity of Government decisions, testing and maintaining equipment, developing emergency plans and procedures, identifying hazards, and coordinating drills and exercises.
- Response-actions taken immediately before, during or directly after an emergency to save lives, minimize damage to property, and increase effectiveness of recovery efforts. This may include emergency medical services, police services, fire and rescue services, public works, and protective actions.
- Recovery-This involves restoring systems to normal. They may be short and long term. Recovery may include damage assessment, debris removal, decontamination, disaster assistance, and temporary housing.

## **“What do I do if I am told to evacuate my home?”**

Depending on the emergency, your local officials may be required to order evacuation to better safeguard the public. In certain cases, evacuation is the preferred protective action, if time permits, to remove the public from jeopardy. If you are told to evacuate, consider going to the home of a relative or friend, or securing hotel or motel accommodations, outside the danger area. Pets will not be allowed into emergency shelters for health, safety, and space reasons (other than service animals). If going to a shelter, you can contact veterinarians outside the danger area for animal boarding.

If told to evacuate:

- Don't panic. Stay calm.
- Collect only essential emergency supplies to take with you.
- Do not go to your child's school. Listen to radio and TV: they will tell you where and how to reach your child. Children will be moved to a shelter outside the affected area.

- Leave pets and farm animals at home, unless you plan to stay with friends or relatives. Leave plenty food and water for your animals.
- Turn off lights and appliances, except refrigerators and freezers.
- Lock doors and windows. Tie a white cloth to your front door to show that you have evacuated.
- Use your own vehicles. Offer rides to neighbors. Leave extra vehicles.
- Follow the recommended route, do not take shortcuts. They may be blocked.
- Notify your “Contact” family member of your location.
- Stay tuned to the Emergency Broadcast Network.
- Do not go home until you are told to.

**“What does it mean to shelter in place?”**

Sheltering in place means staying in your home or business until an emergency subsides or until it is safe for you to exit. It usually requires you to close doors and windows and to shut off ventilation equipment. In extreme cases, you may need to use duct tape and plastic to cover windows and doors.

If told to shelter in place:

- Don’t panic. Stay calm.
- Close all doors and windows.
- Turn off all ventilation systems in your home.
- Stay tuned to the Emergency Broadcast Network.
- Bring any outside animals/pets inside

**“What is a HAZMAT?”**

The term HAZMAT is used when referring to hazardous materials – substances or materials which, because of their chemical, physical, or biological nature, pose a potential risk to life, health, or property if they are released.

**“What do I do in case of a fire?”**

To put out a small fire, cut off its air or fuel by using water or a fire extinguisher. NEVER try to put out a fire that is getting out of control. Get out of the house and call 911.

If your clothing catches on fire, stop, drop, and roll until the fire is out. Running only makes the fire burn faster.

**“How much water should I store for me and my family?”**

Store one gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation, in clean plastic containers.

**“Where can I get emergency information?”**

Getting information during an emergency situation is vital, especially if evacuation may be required. Listen to the following radio and TV stations for information and instructions. Call 1-800-5-GET-EOC (1-800-543-8362) to obtain emergency information on available county programs and services.

**Radio:** WTTR 1470 AM, WGRX 100.7 FM, WIYY 97.9 FM, WBAL 1090 AM, or a preprogrammed National Weather Service weather radio.

**TV:** WMAR Channel 2, WBAL Channel 11, WJZ Channel 13, and WBFF Channel 45.

**“What is a family disaster plan?”**

It is important to meet with your family and prepare a Family Disaster Plan before a disaster.

Complete the following basic checklist:

- Post emergency numbers by telephone
- Teach children to dial 911
- Stock emergency supplies
- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR course
- Identify safe spots in home
- Determine best escape routes from home
- Learn about warning signals such as the Emergency Alert System
- Pick two places to meet in the event of an emergency, one right outside your home and the second outside your neighborhood in case you cannot get home.
- Ask an out-of-state friend or relative to be a contact.
- Plan to care for family members with special needs
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills
- Equip your home with smoke detectors and test them monthly

**“What is a family disaster kit?”**

A family disaster kit contains basic needs to get you through a disaster or until things calm down. Some of the items that should be in your kit are:

- Water
- Food
- First aid supplies
- Clothing and bedding
- Emergency supplies
- Specialty items
- Medications