



## University of Georgia Extension Service Home Disaster Preparedness Plan

Every individual or family needs to have a plan for what to do in the event of a flood, tornado, hurricane, winter storm, fire, terrorist event or any other unintentional disaster. You should make time to discuss with your family the types of disasters most likely to occur in your area. Designate two emergency contacts — one who lives in the area and one who lives far away or in another state. Update your contact's information every six (6) months.

### Emergency Contact #1:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail

### Emergency Contact #2:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail

### Meeting Places Away From Your House

You should choose two meeting places outside of your home — one close by and one outside your neighborhood. If the first place is not accessible, go to the second meeting place.

Meeting Place #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Place #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Disaster Preparedness — Advance Planning

Pre-Planning	
Conduct a personal property inventory.	Make a written inventory of everything in your house and garage. You should include photos or a video of your personal property and update it frequently. Free software is available from the Insurance Information Institute ( <a href="http://www.knowyourstuff.org">www.knowyourstuff.org</a> ).
Back up and store computer and paper records.	This includes your personal property inventory, property photos or videos, property titles, social security cards, mortgage papers, insurance documents, financial records, stocks, bonds, medical and immunization records, birth and marriage certificates, and military service documents.
Post emergency numbers.	List emergency numbers by all the telephones in your house.
Develop an escape route and plan for family members and pets.	Determine primary and secondary places to meet in the event of an emergency. Practice your evacuation plan every six (6) months.
Determine safe areas in your home.	Familiarize family members with safe areas in the house in the event of a tornado.
Learn how to turn the water and power off.	Teach family members where to find water and power cutoffs, and how to operate them.
Add fire and safety equipment to your house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy a fire extinguisher and teach family members how to use it.</li> <li>• Install smoke detectors outside bedrooms and in the kitchen. Check the batteries every six (6) months.</li> <li>• Buy an evacuation ladder for your two-story house. Store the ladder next to a window that opens easily.</li> </ul>
Create a will and designate a guardian for minor children.	Keep your will updated and store it in more than one location, such as with your attorney and in a safe deposit box.
Conduct an insurance audit.	Each year, evaluate your insurance coverage to make sure it provides adequate coverage.
Learn about first aid.	Take a class on first aid or CPR.
Put together an emergency kit.	Keep a supply of water and food for emergencies. You should replace stored water every three (3) months and food every six (6) months.

## Disaster Preparedness — Checklist

Task	Date Completed	Components
Conduct a personal property inventory		List of personal property with photographs or video images. Keep a hard copy or store on a CD or flash drive outside your house. Update regularly.
Back up and store records and documents		Store photocopies, digital images, or computer documents on a CD or flash drive that you keep outside your house. Update regularly.
Post emergency numbers.		Include 911 and poison control. Post near all the telephones in the house and on mobile phones.
Determine an escape route.		Designate a primary and secondary meeting place. Practice every six (6) months.
Establish a pet care plan.		Determine how your pets will be cared for in an emergency. Keep vaccinations current and include pet food and extra water in your emergency kit.
Determine safe areas in your home.		Basement, safe-room, or an interior room with no windows.
Learn how to turn the water and power off.		Find the cutoffs for the water and power. Teach family members how to operate them.
Fire extinguishers.		Place near the kitchen and teach family members how to use it.
Smoke detectors.		Install outside bedrooms and in the kitchen.
Evacuation ladder.		Install near a window that opens on the second story of your house.
Create a will and designate a guardian for minor children.		Keep a copy of your will in more than one location, such as with your attorney and in a safe deposit box.
Update insurance coverage.		Each year, you need to evaluate the coverage and types of insurance you carry.
Learn about first aid.		Take first aid and CPR courses.
Put together an emergency kit.		Water, food, and safety equipment. For a complete supply list, go to <a href="http://www.ready.gov">www.ready.gov</a> or University of Georgia Cooperative Extension <a href="http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/food/emergencies.php">http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/food/emergencies.php</a>

If you lose your home in a fire, flood, tornado, or hurricane, FEMA and other organizations that provide financial assistance after such events will ask you for specific documents that should be kept in a secure location.

Document	Where is it located?
Social Security card(s)	
Property title (home, autos, land)	
Family birth and marriage records	
Insurance information (policy numbers, agent contacts)	
Financial documents (bank accounts, credit card information, loans, etc.)	
Legal documents (will, living will, power of attorney, advance directives, etc.)	
Personal property inventory with photos or video	
Driver's license(s)	
Stocks and bonds	
Medical records (immunizations, list of allergies, current medications, etc.)	
School records	
Names and contact information for family and friends	
Passport(s)	
Other important documents	

**In emergency situations, you may receive some assistance from FEMA. Some of the services provided are:**

- Temporary housing (Money to help rent a place to live or the provision of a place to live temporarily).
- Home repair dollars for homeowners to help repair damage not covered by insurance and make the house safe, sanitary and functional.
- Home replacement (Money to help replace homes destroyed in disaster).
- Home construction (Money to help construct a new home where other options are not available).
- Immediate needs (medical, dental, funeral, transportation, storage, etc.).

### **Disaster Supply Kit Basics — store the items in a waterproof container.**

- Bottled water (1 gallon per day for each person) and water purification tablets.
- Food that does not require refrigeration (*e.g.*, ready-to-eat canned and dried meats; vegetables; fruits; peanut butter, energy bars, granola and fruit bars; pet food; dried or canned milk; and juice).
- First aid kit.
- Cash.
- Extra clothing and one blanket per person.
- Prescription medications.
- Special need items (*e.g.*, baby formula, diapers, special dietary needs, contact lenses solution, pet food).
- Battery powered radio or hand crank radio.
- Flashlight and batteries or hand-crank flashlight.
- Basic tool kit and whistle.
- Paper and plastic products (garbage bags, eating utensils, toilet paper, etc.).
- Manual can opener.
- Map of state and local area.

### **Tips for what to do when a disaster hits:**

- Stay calm.
- Evacuate if necessary.
- Calm family members and check for injuries.
- Calm pets and confine or secure them.
- Sniff for gas leaks. If you smell gas, turn the main valve off, open windows and leave the area.
- Call your emergency contacts.
- Contact your employer after you and your family are in a secure location.

### **Sources:**

- American Red Cross (<http://www.redcross.org>).
- Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA). *Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness*. Retrieved January 6, 2008 from <http://www.fema.org>.
- Insurance Information Institute. *Home Inventory – Know Your Stuff*. Retrieved January 8, 2008, from <http://www.knowyourstuff.org>.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security (<http://www.ready.gov>).

**Author:** This information was compiled by Dr. Pamela R. Turner, Housing Extension Specialist for the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences (January 2008).