

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Disasters can happen unexpectedly, but being prepared and having a plan ahead of time can save time and even save lives.

BEFORE AN EVENT

- Check your insurance coverage and make sure it seems appropriate for you and your family. If you're a renter, be sure to get renter's insurance!
- Have an emergency escape plan in place and review with family members.
- Know your exits, make sure they are never blocked, and be sure all family members know how to unlock doors and/or windows to escape.
- Keep an emergency kit somewhere quickly accessible. Include things like: a first aid kit, blankets, flashlights, batteries, and an emergency radio.
- Keep fire extinguishers in easily accessible areas and review how to use them.
- Know your neighbors and their phone numbers in case you need to contact them.
- Test smoke and CO² alarms monthly and replace the batteries if needed.
- Digitize important documents and save them to a cloud based server.
- Document all your belongings through photos and videos. Store these files in a cloud based server.
- Make sure all family members memorize your address to be able to tell emergency operators.
- Review emergency numbers with family members and make sure they have them memorized.
- Eliminate risks ahead of time. (Keep matches away from children, don't use extension cords long term, clean chimneys and dryer vents, don't leave candles unattended, etc.)

AFTER AN EVENT

- Seek medical attention right away if needed, do not wait.
- Do NOT re-enter your home. Your belongings are replaceable; you are not.
- Contact family and friends to let them know you are safe.
- File a claim with your insurance company. They may issue you emergency funds up front for housing and/or necessities.
- Contact your local American Red Cross branch as they may have funds available to you and your family.
- Reach out to Churches and Govn't Officials in your area - they may be able to assist with donations of food and clothing.
- Contact your mortgage company to see if you can get on a disaster forbearance plan while you live somewhere else.
- Cancel services that won't be in use such as: electric, cable, internet, water, etc.
- Sign up for credit monitoring just in case your personal documents end up somewhere they shouldn't.
- Replace any medications and/or prescriptions you may need.
- Sign up for mail forwarding to your new address so you can still receive mail correspondence.
- Seek professional help if needed. These experiences are traumatic and talking to someone can help you cope.