

# PREREQUISITE FOR NATURAL DISASTER

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## **Learn About Past and Current Hazards in Your Area**

Develop awareness of the natural and man-made threats specific to where you live. Also, identify the emergency resources available to you and your community, as this will help you know what scenarios to plan for.

## **Identify Meeting Places**

Set predetermined rendezvous points for yourself and loved ones in the case of an emergency. Be sure everyone who is a part of your emergency plan (especially younger children) knows exactly where these locations are. Established meeting places will help you all to find each other should normal lines of communication like internet connectivity and cell phone service fail.

## **Make a List of Out-of-Area Emergency Contacts**

Establish a loved one or trusted friend who lives beyond your geographical region as an emergency contact. They should be able to send help and share breaking information since they'll likely be outside of the disaster zone.

## **Identify and Save Evacuation Routes**

Map out the quickest paths of exit from your home, neighborhood, and community. Once you've established the most direct paths of exit, work to determine alternate routes of exit, too. Remember, if you're trying to evacuate your neighborhood—then everyone else

probably is too. Your alternate routes would help to avoid bottlenecks and congestion points.

### **Know the Locations of Utility Shut-offs**

Locate your house's gas meter, water line, and electrical box and learn how to interact with them (or at least learn how to turn them off) in the case of an emergency. Gas leaks, electrical fires, and flooding from broken pipes can cause additional harm during and after a disaster and knowing what you can manipulate to reduce the damage can be a big help.

### **Know the Emergency Policies of Schools and Adult Care Centers**

Contact these places and find out what their emergency protocols are. Be sure to ask which emergency shelters are a part of their plans, what communication resources they rely on, and how they plan to reunite you with your loved ones in an emergency.

### **Identify Safe Spots in Each Room to Take Cover**

Sometimes disaster offers no warning, and the best thing you can do is brace yourself. With your family, go through each room in your house identifying sturdy tables and interior walls that will provide shelter from falling debris.

### **Stock Up on Extra Medication**

If you or a loved one relies on prescription medication, talk with your doctor about securing an emergency stockpile. Always try to have an additional month's worth of medication on hand in case healthcare services become unavailable.

### **Make Special Provisions**

You should create your preparedness plan based on the needs of the people you are responsible for. Mentally walk through and consider the extra difficulties that children,

seniors, non-English speakers, and individuals with disabilities might face during an emergency and determine how to accommodate them as you attempt to move to safety.

### **Check Smoke and Carbon-Monoxide Detectors**

Set a schedule and get into the habit of maintaining the alarms in your home. It's especially important to guard against dangerous levels of carbon monoxide if you end up using an electrical generator during an emergency.

Proper prior planning and good disaster preparedness can't eliminate the risk of a disaster, but it can help reduce the impact or speed recovery when one does hit.