

POCKET GUIDE TO STAYING SAFE IN NATURAL DISASTERS. WHAT TO DO IN DIFFERENT DISASTERS. HOW TO PREPARE.

WHAT TO DO DURING DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISASTERS

What to Do During an *Earthquake*

Be aware that some earthquakes are actually foreshocks and a larger earthquake might occur. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and if you are indoors, stay there until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

If indoors

- **DROP** to the ground; take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture; and **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- Stay in bed if you are there when the earthquake strikes. Hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. In that case, move to the nearest safe place.
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, load-bearing doorway.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.
- DO NOT use the elevators.

If outdoors

- Stay there.
- Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls. Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most earthquake-related casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass, and falling objects.

If in a moving vehicle

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires.
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

If trapped under debris

- Do not light a match.
- Do not move about or kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

What to Do During a *Tsunami*

- Turn on your radio/TV to learn if there is a tsunami warning if an earthquake occurs and you are in a coastal area.
- Move inland to higher ground immediately and stay there.
- If there is noticeable recession in water away from the shoreline this is nature's tsunami warning and it should be heeded. You should move away immediately.
- Stay away from flooded and damaged areas until officials say it is safe to return.
- Stay away from debris in the water; it may pose a safety hazard to boats and people.

What to Do During a *Volcanic Eruption*

If a Volcano Erupts Where You Live

- **Follow the evacuation order** issued by authorities and evacuate immediately from the volcano area to avoid flying debris, hot gases, lateral blast, and lava flow.
- Be aware of mudflows. The danger from a mudflow increases near stream channels and with prolonged heavy rains. Mudflows can move faster than you can walk or run. Look upstream before crossing a bridge, and do not cross the bridge if a mudflow is approaching.
- Avoid river valleys and low-lying areas.
- Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance - infants, elderly people, and people with disabilities.

Protection from Falling Ash

- Listen to a battery-powered radio or television for the latest emergency information.
- If you have a respiratory ailment, avoid contact with any amount of ash.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use goggles and wear eyeglasses instead of contact lenses.
- Use a dust mask or hold a damp cloth over your face to help with breathing.
- Stay away from areas downwind from the volcano to avoid volcanic ash.
- Stay indoors until the ash has settled unless there is a danger of the roof collapsing.
- Close doors, windows, and all ventilation in the house (chimney vents, furnaces, air conditioners, fans, and other vents).
- Clear heavy ash from flat or low-pitched roofs and rain gutters.
- Avoid running car or truck engines. Driving can stir up volcanic ash that can clog engines, damage moving parts, and stall vehicles.
- Avoid driving in heavy ash fall unless absolutely required. If you have to drive, do so very slowly.

What to Do During a *Cyclone*

- Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Listen to radio/TV for the latest information.
- Look for approaching storms.
- Look for the following danger signs:
 - Dark, often greenish sky
 - Large hail
 - A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
 - Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.
- If you are under a tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately.
NOTE in places where you have designated cyclone shelters – take shelter there.

If indoors

- Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.

If in a moving vehicle:

- Get out and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter.

If outside

- Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.
- Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.

Source: FEMA

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN EMERGENCY

There are three key things you can do to prepare for an emergency:

- 1) Prepare an **emergency kit**
- 2) **Plan** ahead
- 3) Be **informed**

1. Prepare a kit

At a minimum, it is recommended that you have the basic supplies listed below. Keep supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit (“grab-bag”) that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.

- Water—(3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Food—non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items
- Multipurpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area

Consider the needs of all family members and add supplies to your kit. Suggested items to help meet additional needs are:

- Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Games and activities for children
- Two-way radios
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Manual can opener

Additional supplies to keep at home or in your kit based on the types of disasters common to your area:

- Whistle
- Surgical masks
- Matches
- Rain gear
- Towels
- Work gloves
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Household liquid bleach
- Entertainment items
- Blankets or sleeping bags

2. Make a plan

- Meet with your family or household members.
- 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.

Plan what to do in case you are separated during an emergency

- Choose two places to meet:
 - Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, such as a fire
 - 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 their cell phones.

Plan what to do if you have to evacuate

- Decide where you would go and what route you would take to get there. You may choose to stay with friends or relatives in a safe location or go to an evacuation shelter if necessary.
- Practice evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on your map in case roads are impassable.

3. Be informed

You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you understand the risks, communicate with others in advance and know how to stay informed before, during and after a disaster. In doing so, it's important to:

- Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area.
- Learn how you can stay informed of changing conditions and instructions in an emergency (usually through radio/TV) and how your community will be notified of a possible disaster. Notification methods vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via emergency radio and TV broadcasts. You might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call or SMS, or emergency workers may go door-to-door.
- Schools, daycare providers, workplaces, neighborhoods and apartment buildings should all have site-specific emergency plans, just like individuals and families. Ask about plans at the places where your family spends the most time: work, school and other places you frequent.
- Ask also about emergency preparedness and response plans at your nearest health facilities

Source: Red Cross

Print this guide and keep it at hand!