

In-Site For Managing Work & Family

Your Family Disaster Kit

The first 72 hours after a disaster is the most critical time for families. This is when you are most likely to be on your own. For this reason it is important for your family to have a family disaster kit. This kit should provide for all your family's basic needs.

Since each family is different and has special needs, you will need to personalize your kit. Selecting items for your Family Disaster Kit can be a family project. Have a family conference and talk about the importance of the kit, items to be included, and where it should be stored. Depending on age, each family member should make a list of the special items that he or she needs included in the kit.

Your family also should decide on a rotation plan to keep supplies of water, food, medicine, batteries, and other special items fresh and up-to-date.

Everyone grade school and older should learn to use some of the essential equipment, such as the fire extinguisher.

Collect those items that you already have on hand. Make a list of other essential items and develop a plan for getting those items.

Many items can be found at discount stores, camping and sporting stores, or ordered from specialty camping or emergency supply catalogs. Some items are definite musts. These include a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

Items To Include

Emergency Light

- Flashlight (preferably shock- and water-resistant) with extra batteries stored in water-tight plastic bag
- Oil lamps, lanterns, and camp lights (store fuel, such as oil, kerosene, or gas, carefully)
- Unscented candles
- 40-hour emergency candles and tub candles
- 12-hour light sticks
- Waterproof matches in a waterproof match box case

Water

- One gallon of water per day for each family member (two quarts for drinking and two quarts for food preparation and personal hygiene)

Use plastic containers (soft drink bottles) for storing, and replace water every six months.

- Water purifying tablets (iodine or chlorine)
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper

To purify water, add two drops of chlorine per quart of water (four drops if the water is cloudy). Water needs to sit for 30 minutes before drinking.

Food

- Store enough non-perishable (no refrigeration) food for three days.

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Canned goods have long shelf lives.

Select foods that your family will eat, to include:

—fruits, vegetables, and meats, dried meats, beef jerky.

—high-energy foods, such as peanut butter, jelly, crackers, unsalted nuts, health food bars, trail mix, dried fruit.

—canned, powdered, or crystallized juices.

—staples, such as sugar, flour, salt, and pepper.

—stress foods, like sugar cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals.

—bouillon cubes, soups in a cup, or dried “soups in a cup.”

—vitamins that family members take daily.

—non-perishable foods/water for pets.

Nursing mothers, babies, young children, and the elderly require special foods. So do family members on special diets and those with allergies.

Rotate your stored foods into your regular food pantry to keep your supply of food fresh. Make sure that you have a *manual* can opener and bottle opener stored with your food supply.

Radio

- Radio with extra set of batteries

Select radio and flashlight that uses the same size batteries.

First Aid Kit and Medicines

General Items

- Assorted sizes of sterile adhesive bandages, sterile gauze pads, and roll bandages

If you have children, you may want to include the kids that they like to wear.

- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape and triangular bandages
- Scissors, tweezers, needle and thread, and assorted sizes of safety pins
- Medicine dropper and thermometer
- Safety razor and blades
- Bar of antibacterial soap (i.e. Dial, SafeGuard)
- Moistened towelettes packages
- Antiseptic spray
- Tongue depressors, wooden applicator sticks, and cotton-tip swabs
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Topical ointment for skin rashes, burns, cuts
- Latex gloves

Non-Prescription Drugs

- Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever

- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for upset stomach)
- Laxative
- Eye wash
- Rubbing alcohol
- Antiseptic or hydrogen peroxide
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Prescription Medicine

- Three-day supply of all medicines for family members

Medicine should be clearly labeled with dosage and name of family member. Package medicine used by each family member individually in self-closing top plastic bags.

Keep medicines up to date. Discard ones that are no longer used. Rotate medicines every two to three months.

First Aid Manual

- The American Red Cross’s *Standard First Aid & Personal Safety* manual (available for \$5 from your local Red Cross office.

It will help if you and your family members to have taken a basic first aid Red Cross course and know how to give CPR. In case of a disaster, you may find that you are your own nurse and doctor. It helps to acquire basic skills before you need them.

Fire Extinguisher

- ABC home fire extinguisher (for use on any type of fire, including electrical, grease, or gas)

Keep your fire extinguisher in working condition. Every family member needs to know how to use it.

Personal Care, Special Items, and Sanitation

- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, denture cleaner
- Mouth wash
- Antibacterial soap
- Bath cloth and bath towels
- Combs, brushes
- Deodorant
- Shaving equipment
- Towelettes
- Hand lotion
- Fingernail file
- Feminine hygiene items
- Sewing kit

Some family member may have special needs. For babies and toddlers, you will need diapers, bottles,

pacifiers, and baby wipes. For those family members who wear contact lenses, you will need cleaning solutions and other specialized equipment.

- Portable toilet with toilet chemicals or plastic bucket with tight lid, or small shovel for digging a latrine
- Disinfectant and household chlorine bleach
- Toilet paper and towelettes
- Plastic garbage bags with ties

Money

- Small amount of money (bills and change), traveler's checks, credit cards

Clothing and Bedding

- One complete change of clothing for each family member (change clothing according to season)
- Rain gear
- Hat and gloves, and in cold weather, thermal underwear
- Blanket or sleeping bag for every family member
- 18-hour hand and body warmers (optional) for every family member

Babies, toddlers, and small children may need additional clothing and bedding items. Instead of one change of clothing, it might be wise to pack two changes of clothing. Older adults may need additional sweaters and blankets.

Tools

- Adjustable wrenches (crescent and pipe types for shutting off main gas and water valves)
- Hammer, nails, pliers, screwdrivers, grip-type wrench, crowbar, duct tape
- Shovel (collapsible)
- Pocket or utility knife
- Signal flare
- Paper and pencil
- Rope

Cooking Equipment and Eating Utensils

Food Preparation

- Paper towels
- Plastic wrap, plastic bags with self-sealing tops
- Heavy-duty aluminum foil
- Package towelettes
- Pot holder
- Liquid detergent
- Plastic bowl with tightly fitting cover
- Heavy-duty garbage bags
- Disposable plastic gloves
- Manual can opener

Cooking Equipment

- Sauce pan with lid
- Frying pan
- Pitcher
- Paring knife, spoon, tongs
- Outdoor grill or portable stove (optional)

Personal Eating Utensils

- Knives, forks, spoons (plastic)
- Drinking cups (plastic)
- Plates (plastic)

Games for Children and Books for Adults

- Games, toys, cards for children
- Books for family members
- List of games and other activities for family play

Summary

Having a family disaster kit on hand and in useable condition can help you to be self-sufficient for 72 hours. We hope you will never need to use it. If you do, though, you will have peace of mind knowing that you and your family are as prepared as you can be. By preparing a family disaster kit, you and your family have worked together to prepare a functional environment for yourselves.

The use of brand names in this publication does not imply endorsement of the products named or criticism of similar ones not mentioned.

Prepared by
Harriet Tutterow Jennings, Family Environment Specialist

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