

**Emergency Plans for
Residents in
Mobilehome Parks**

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Introduction:

The most important feature of any home is something you probably do not see when you walk through the door. But it could save your life. It is **safety**. Safety comes in all shapes and sizes: smoke detectors; fire extinguishers; escape routes; carefully maintained heating and electrical systems; and knowing what to do and where to go in case of fire, flood, tornado, or other disasters. The key to being prepared in the event of a disaster or sudden emergency is preplanning and practice drills.

Disaster Preparedness Emergency Plan

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Prepare now for a sudden emergency. Knowing what to do in an emergency is your best protection and your responsibility. Learn how to protect yourself and your family by planning ahead. To obtain more information, you may want to contact your local emergency management agency or civil defense office and the local American Red Cross chapter - be prepared to take notes.

You will need to gather the following information:

- Find out which disasters are most likely to occur in your area.
- Ask how to prepare for each disaster.
- Ask how you would be warned of an emergency.
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Learn your community's main evacuation routes.
- If needed, ask about special assistance for the elderly or disabled persons.
- Ask about animal care during and after an emergency. Animals may not be allowed inside emergency shelters due to health regulations.

Checklist of Emergency Procedures

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disasters. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children, elderly individuals, and persons needing special assistance. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team. The following may be used in creating your own Emergency Response Plan.

- Draw a floor plan of your residence and mark two escape routes from each room.
- Install safety features in your home, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation.
- Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.
- Post emergency telephone numbers near the telephone.
- Instruct household members to turn on a battery powered radio for emergency information.
- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).
- Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 and a long distance contact person.
- Pick two meeting places: 1) a place near your home in case of fire; 2) a place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster.
- Keep family records in a water and fire-proof container.
- Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main shut off valve to your mobilehome. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves. Turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. **If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.**
- Take a basic first aid and CPR class.
- Prepare a disaster supply kit.

If Disaster Strikes:

- Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action.
- Check for injuries; give first aid and get help for seriously injured.
- Listen to your battery powered radio for news and instructions.
- Evacuate if advised to do so. Wear appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Check for damage to your home - use a flashlight only. **Do not light matches or turn on electrical switches**, if you suspect damage.
- Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards.
- If you are remaining in your home, sniff for gas leaks, starting at the hot water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and any other flammable liquids immediately.

Remember to:

- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact - **do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.**
- Check on your neighbors, especially elderly or disabled persons.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is shut off.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

Earthquake:

Prior to any earthquake, each resident should preplan and practice steps they will take in the event of an earthquake. Manufactured home owners/residents need to know the physical location of piers/supports under their homes. During a severe earthquake, manufactured homes have been known to drop off their supports and these supports may come through the floor causing physical damage above. In order to avoid injury, residents must know the location of the supports and where safe areas are located within their manufactured homes.

Be sure your manufactured home is installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and all applicable state regulations and requirements.

- Indoors: take cover under any sturdy piece of furniture or doorway or get up on a bed or couch that is against a wall.
- Stay away from windows or ceiling objects such as lighting fixtures.
- **Do not light matches or candles.**
- **Do not turn on electrical** equipment of any kind.
- Use only **battery operated** flash lights and radios.
- Outdoors: find an open area and remain there until the earthquake stops. Stay away from power poles and electrical lines, tall buildings, bridges, brick or block walls, underpasses and trees.
- Listen to a self contained (battery operated) radio for emergency instructions.
- Confine and secure all pets so they will not hamper emergency service employees in the performance of their duties.
- After shocks may occur, so be prepared.

Fire Safety:

Fire spreads quickly and the entire structure may rapidly become engulfed in flames. There are steps you can take to minimize the dangers associated with fires and improve your families chances of survival should a fire erupt in your manufactured home.

- Be sure you have properly operating smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. If one or more of your smoke detectors are battery operated, replace the batteries annually or more often if necessary. An easy to remember schedule is to change your batteries to coincide with daylight savings time.
- Plan, with the whole family, at least two escape routes from your manufactured home.
- Practice fire drills regularly, using a smoke detector as a signal to start the drill. Follow your escape plan.
- Be sure your heating and electrical systems are properly maintained and in good working order. Change the heating filters as recommended by the heater manufacturer.
- Carefully follow the instructions on all appliances and heating units, taking special care not to overload your electrical system.
- Be especially careful when displaying your holiday decorations.
- Keep matches, lighters, and candles away from small children. Children tend to be curious about fire and tend to hide when frightened. Fire drills are most important for children between the ages of 2 and 12 years old.
- Insure your personal property. Shop around for a company that best meets your needs for renter's or home owner's insurance.
- Store important documents, such as birth certificates, marriage licenses, social security cards, and insurance papers, in a fire-proof box or in the refrigerator, or rent a safety deposit box at your local bank.
- Make an itemized list of your personal property, including furniture, clothing, appliances, and other valuables. If available, make a video tape of your home and your possessions. Keep the list and/or tape up-to-date and store them along with the other important documents.

In Case of Fire:

- ♦ Immediately assess the problem (where, extent involved, to assist you in exiting away from the fire source)
- ♦ Know how to use a fire extinguisher
- ♦ Get everyone out of the house **immediately**
- ♦ **Without risk to any person**, get pets out of the house
- ♦ Call 9-1-1 or the Fire Department then call the park office (from a neighbors phone) and:
 1. Give: your name, telephone number you are calling from, park address, space number where the fire is, any helpful locational directions.
 2. Describe the type/nature of the fire (gas, wood, chemical, electrical).
 3. State that the fire is in a manufactured home and report any known injuries.
 4. Turn off the gas and electricity at the home(s) affected.
 5. Tell all residents near the fire source to stand ready with water hoses to wet down their homes or adjacent building(s) in case of traveling sparks.
 6. Make sure all occupants have left the affected home and **immediately** let the fire department personnel know if any disabled person(s) or anyone not accounted for and may still be in the residence.
 7. **Never go back into a burning home.**
 8. If smoky conditions are present, remember that smoke rises and stay as close to the floor as possible. Before exiting through a door, feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand. If it is **hot**, find another way out. **Never open a door that is hot to the touch.**
 9. Should your clothing catch fire: **first drop...then roll. Never run.** If a rug or blanket is handy, roll yourself up in it until the fire is out.
 10. If trapped on an upper floor, hang something out of a window to signal rescuers.

Floods:

Flood *Watch* means that there is the possibility of flooding.

Flood *Warning* means that flooding has begun or is imminent.

Before:

- Know the elevation of your property in relation to nearby streams, rivers, and lakes.
- Have several escape routes planned.
- The National Weather Service continuously broadcasts updated weather conditions, warnings and forecasts on National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios. A NOAA radio may be purchased at radio or electronic stores. Local broadcast stations transmit Emergency Alert System messages which may be heard on standard radios.
- When rising water threatens, move everything possible to higher ground.
- If flooding is imminent and time permits, turn off main electrical switch. Disconnect all electrical appliances. Cover outlets with tape.
- Prepare and maintain your Family Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Most standard residential insurance policies do not cover flood loss. In flood-prone areas, the National Flood Insurance Program makes flood insurance available for manufactured homes on foundations. See your insurance broker for details.
- Secure your Liquefied Petroleum Gas Containers. One option is to secure the tanks with stainless steel straps that connect to auger anchors in the ground.
- Strap and secure your hot water heater.

During:

- Take all flood warnings seriously. **Do not wait.** Get to higher ground **immediately** as flood waters often rise faster than expected.

- If time permits, take all important papers, photographs, medicines, and eye-glasses.
- If one escape route is not passable do not waste any time - try another route or back track to higher ground.
- Use travel routes specified by local officials. **Never** drive through flooded roadways. **Do not** bypass or go around barricades.
- Wear life preservers if possible. Wear appropriate clothing and **sturdy shoes**.
- Avoid any contact with flood water. Flood water may be contaminated and pose health problems. If cuts or wounds come in contact with flood waters, clean the wound as thoroughly as possible.
- Take your Family Disaster Supplies Kit with you.
- Lock your home before leaving.
- When you reach a safe place, call your pre-determined family contact person.

After Floods:

- Return home **only** after authorities say the danger of more flooding is over.
- Do not drink tap water unless it is declared safe. Boil water if unsure.
- If fresh food has come in contact with flood waters, **throw it out**.
- Do not turn on main electrical switch. First have the electrical system checked by a professional.
- A flood can cause emotional and physical stress. You need to look after yourself and your family as you focus on cleanup and repair.
- Rest often and eat well. Keep a realistic and manageable schedule. Make a list and do jobs one at a time.
- Contact the American Red Cross and get a copy of the book *Repairing Your Flooded Home*. The book will tell you how to safely return to your home and begin the recovery process.

Tornado: Although tornados are not a common occurrence in all areas of the United States, they have been reported.

- Pay close attention to weather reports. Know the difference between a watch (when conditions are ripe for a severe weather event) and a warning (when a severe weather event is occurring or is imminent).
- Plan where to go during severe weather - for instance, the community club house, or a relative's basement.
- When a tornado warning has been issued, **leave your manufactured home immediately**. Go to your pre-determined safe place or lie down in a low area with your hands covering the back of your head and neck.
- Be sure to keep a transistor radio - with working and extra batteries handy.
- Keep your Family Disaster Supplies Kit near an exit door.

First Aid:

- Information on first aid can be found in your local phone book or by contacting the American Red Cross.
- Utilize known persons who are medically trained (such as Doctors, Nurses, or people medically trained in CPR and first aid) to assist in administering first aid to those injured.
- If the injured individual(s) are in imminent danger they should carefully be moved to a safe location to administer first aid.
- In the case where injuries are severe and movement could cause further injuries, **do not move** the injured. Make the injured person(s) as comfortable as possible and wait for emergency personnel.
- Before emergencies, prepare a first aid kit. Have the kit in an easy to locate place. Make sure all family members know the location of the kit.

Sample First Aid Kit:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- 2 and 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6 each)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangle bandages (3)
- 2 and 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls each)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades (2)
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex gloves (2 pairs)
- Sunscreen
- Aspirin
- Syrup of Ipecac
- Activated charcoal (use only if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Government and Relief Agencies estimate that after a major disaster, it could take up to three days for relief workers to reach some areas. In such cases, a 72 hour disaster supply kit could mean the difference between life and death. In other emergencies, a 72 hour disaster supply kit means the difference between having a miserable experience or one that's like a pleasant family camp out. In the event of an evacuation, you will need to have items in an easy-to-carry container like a backpack or duffle bag.

Family Disaster Supplies Kit

- 3-5 gallons of water (one gallon of water per person per day)
- Method of water purification
- Food: ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables; canned juices, milk, soup; high energy foods - peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix; specialty foods for infants, elderly persons or persons on special diets; comfort/stress foods - cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee, tea bags; vitamins
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Second method of starting a fire
- Tent/shelter
- Wool-blend blankets or sleeping bags (1 per person)
- Emergency reflective blanket
- Lightweight stove and fuel
- Hand and body warm packs
- Rain poncho
- Light sources
- Flashlight, batteries, and extra batteries
- Candle
- Light sticks
- Tools (pliers, hammer, screw drivers, bolt cutters)
- Pocket/utility knife
- Shovel
- Hatchet or axe
- Sewing kit
- 50-foot nylon rope
- First aid kit and supplies
- Burn gel and dressings
- Bottle of potassium iodide tablets
- Radio, batteries, and extra batteries
- Whistle with neck cord
- Personal sanitation equipment
- Personal comfort kit (include soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, tissue, razor, deodorant), and any other needed items
- Extra Clothing (include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person per day) extra socks, underwear, hat, gloves, and sturdy shoes

Family Disaster Supplies Kit (continued)

- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Cash (at least \$20) or traveler's checks, change for phone calls
- Non-electric can opener
- Fire extinguisher: small canister, ABC type
- Important family papers (copies of birth certificates, marriage licenses, wills, insurance forms, phone numbers, credit card information)
- Sun block/sun glasses
- Portable toilet
- Insect repellent
- Tape
- Compass
- Aluminum foil
- Signal flare
- Household chlorine bleach
- Special or prescription medication
- Baby items - formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk, medications, and favorite security items
- Games, books, toys
- Contact lenses and supplies; a spare set of contacts or glasses if available

You should inspect your kit at least twice a year. Rotate food and water every six months. Check children's clothing for proper fit. Adjust clothing for winter or summer needs. Check expiration dates on batteries, light sticks, warm packs, food and water. Keep a light source stored in the top of your kit for easy access in the dark. Your kit should be in a portable container located near an exit of your house. A large plastic garbage can with a lid makes an excellent storage container. Make sure you have not overloaded your kit as you may have to carry it long distances to reach safety or shelter. You may want to have a backpack or duffle bag for each family member and divide up the rations in the event that family members are separated during evacuation or the disaster.