$8.00

NNWI

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK



PREPARE



PLAN

PRACTICE



SURVIVE



ON THE INSIDE

- Blackouts
- Earthquakes
- Fires
- Floods
- Heat Waves
- Hurricanes
- Landslides and Mudslides
- Thunderstorms and Lightning
- Tornados
- Tsunamis
- Volcanic Eruptions
- Wild Fires
- Winter Storms and Cold Waves
- Extra Preparations for Business
- Emergency Preparedness Check List

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INTRODUCTION

As a member of Neighborhood Watch, you are already helping your community **"LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER"**; and, as a result, you are helping your local law enforcement agency drive down crime. But there are still other ways to help yourself, your loved ones, friends and neighbors by being prepared for other potential causes of trouble and distress.

Blackouts, earthquakes, fires, floods, heat waves, hurricanes, landslides & mudslides, thunderstorms & lightning, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, wildfires, winter storms & cold waves are mainly forces of nature, and we will be discussing them in this National Neighborhood Watch Institute manual.

The best we can do to help ourselves, our loved ones, and our community is to be as ready as possible when these events strike. Although we cannot prevent most, if any, of these, we can certainly be prepared when one does occur.

Always remember that your local law enforcement agency has been trained to handle these events, and that our purpose is to help them by being better prepared to help ourselves as much as possible; and then to help our officers by possibly serving as extra "eyes and ears" for them without endangering ourselves or anyone else in the process.

WHY YOU NEED EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

Those who ensure the best possible results in any emergency situation are those who try to be the best prepared. At home, have a family communications plan which includes an evacuation plan, and which coordinates with your Neighborhood Watch, school and work plans. Practice your plans.

Create a disaster kit which contains enough supplies for every member of the family for at least three days. It should include prescription medications, infant formula and any other provisions for special needs any member of your family may have. Remember to refresh and replenish this kit every 6 months, ensuring that all essential needs are fresh and up to date.

Everybody at a workplace, including the business owner, a manager, or an employee, should be aware of what to do in case of an emergency. This includes knowing where to find essential supplies, and emergency contact information for everybody. An emergency situation affects everybody, and danger pulls no rank.

Make sure you know alternative routes between home and workplace, and carry a disaster supplies kit in your car or even a small kit on public transportation.

Always try to keep your vehicle's fuel tank at least half-full, as gas stations rely on electricity to pump gas, and there may be no electricity available for awhile after even a "minor" emergency.

As we say in Neighborhood Watch, **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER"**. Working together can save lives and minimize property damage. If the subject has never come up, introduce emergency preparedness at your next meeting. Your group should then devise plans and strategies on what everybody can do. For instance, some of you may have had some medical training. If not, perhaps a group CPR and Basic First Aid course should be on your agenda as soon as possible. Some of you have technical skills, in construction, work with computers, or may own a power generator. Everybody can do something really well, even if they may not know it yet. The point is: try to identify everyone's strengths.

Ascertain who may need special assistance during a crisis, such as the elderly or disabled, and assign people to help these folks. Consider asking a neighbor to be your back-up, if you are

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unable to pick up your kids from school, or your elderly parent and/or disabled family member from a daycare provider. Be sure to provide written consent to all schools that your assigned person is allowed to pick up your child.

Your local Red Cross chapter can help you and your group to learn even more about emergency preparedness, and it offers Basic First Aid and CPR courses. Some of you may even want to inquire about volunteering. Somebody, somewhere in your community needs your help.

THE BASIC RULES OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

The two major issues we need to address in order to be prepared are:

I.) CREATING, AND THEN MAINTAINING, A 23-ITEM "BASIC EMERGENCY KIT"

II.) PLANNING AHEAD FOR POTENTIAL EMERGENCIES
THE 7 WAYS TO SAFETY

I.) WHAT IS IN A "BASIC EMERGENCY KIT" (In order of importance, but do try to obtain all of the items):

1.) WATER — A minimum of one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation. (This is a minimum of three total gallons per person.) Understand that children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more water, and prepare accordingly. If you live in a warm climate, more water may be necessary. Always store water in clean plastic bottles like soft drink containers, and leave at least one-inch of space near the top if the water will be kept frozen. As we will later explain, keeping frozen water on hand is a good idea in preparing for emergencies.

2.) FOOD — At least a three-day supply of non-perishable food that will require little or no water, no refrigeration, preparation or cooking. Remember to pack a manual can opener and eating utensils. Choose foods your family will eat, but avoid salty foods, as they will make you thirsty. Some good suggestions for food to store include, (in alphabetical order), canned fruits and vegetables; canned juices; canned meats (ready-to-eat); crackers; dried fruit; dry cereal or granola; high-energy foods; milk (the non-perishable, pasteurized kind); nuts; peanut butter; protein or fruit bars; and vitamins. If you have a baby in your household, pack formula, baby food and diapers.

If there is other food you and/or your family feels you must have to be comfortable, it is your kit, after all. Just be sure whatever it is follows the rules of little or no water, no refrigeration, and no preparation or cooking.

3.) FIRST AID KIT & A FIRST AID INSTRUCTION MANUAL — In an emergency, anyone could get cut, burned or suffer some other injury. Many injuries are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention. Knowing how to treat minor injuries can enable you or someone else to stop bleeding, prevent infection and assist in decontamination during an emergency. Again, please consider taking a Basic First Aid course, but be sure to have the manual on hand.

Musts for your Basic First Aid Kit include, (in alphabetical order), adhesive bandages (in a variety of sizes), antibiotic ointment (to prevent infection); burn ointment (to prevent infection); cleansing agent (soap or antibiotic towelettes to

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disinfect); eye wash solution (to flush the eyes or as a general contaminant); gloves (at least two pairs of Latex or other kind of sterile gloves); prescribed medical supplies (such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies); prescription medications anyone in your group takes everyday (such as insulin, heart medicines, and asthma inhalers; and always remember to check the expiration dates on all of these medicines 3-4 times a year); sterile dressings (to stop bleeding); and a thermometer.

It is a good idea to have stiff cardboard and rope to act as an emergency splint.

Some good additions to the Kit include, (in alphabetical order), antacid (for upset stomach); anti-diarrhea medication; aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever; laxative; sterile scissors; a tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant; tweezers; and any other special needs someone in your group, such as an infant, elderly person, or sick person may need on a regular basis.

These may include, for infants, diaper rash ointment, extra moist towelettes, and teething supplies. Adults may want extra contact lenses & supplies or extra eye glasses and denture needs.

4.) BATTERY-POWERED RADIO AND/OR TV AND EXTRA BATTERIES

5.) A NOAA WEATHER RADIO WITH TONE ALERT AND EXTRA BATTERIES

6.) ONE FLASHLIGHT (At Least) AND EXTRA BATTERIES

7.) HOUSEHOLD PLAIN CHLORINE BLEACH (NOT scented, color safe, or any other bleaches with additives) & A MEDICINE DROPPER—When diluted nine parts water to one part regular bleach, the bleach can be used as a disinfectant. If you run low on water, you can treat dirty water by using 16 drops of regular plain household bleach per gallon of water.

8.) DUST MASKS, PLASTIC SHEETING (OR HEAVYWEIGHT PLASTIC TRASH BAGS), SCISSORS AND SEVERAL ROLLS OF DUCT TAPE (and, if possible, PORTABLE AIR PURIFIER with a HEPA filter)—Some potential emergencies could send microscopic particles into the air which could make someone ill, cause lung damage, or worse. But these particles can only be hurtful if inhaled or absorbed through open cuts. Therefore, it might become important to be able to create a barrier between yourself and your group, and any contamination.

Face masks that fit snugly over the nose and mouth should be made available for everyone. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children. Many hardware stores sell face masks rated on the basis of how small a particle they can filter in an industrial setting. Some emergencies will obviously require more protection than others. A face mask is optimum, but even a cloth over your nose and mouth is better than nothing. Be prepared to improvise anything you might have on hand to protect your nose, mouth, eyes and the cuts in your skin. It is very important that most of the air one breathes comes through the mask or cloth, and not around it.

Some emergencies will require staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and your group and potentially contaminated air outside. This is known as "shelter-in-place". It might become vital to be able to use the plastic sheeting or trash bags to tape up all windows, doors and air vents if you must seal off a room from outside contamination. Consider pre-cutting and labeling these sheets so you will be able to install them more quickly in case you ever need them.

The Portable Air Purifier with a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air Filtration) filter can help after you have sealed up your area, as it will offer extra protection from the outside contaminants. No seal is ever perfect, some leakage may occur, and some foul air may have already made

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its way inside your space before you could erect the barrier, or even while you were installing it. Once the contaminants are trapped inside the filter, they no longer present any danger. The filters will stop dander, dust, molds, smoke, biological agents and other contaminants, but cannot stop chemical gases.

9.) SIGNALLING WHISTLES—-A whistle is highly recommended during an emergency, especially if one is trapped by debris. Shouting can cause a person to inhale dangerous amounts of dust. Where there is little air, this is extremely dangerous. Where there are possible contaminants in the air, it could become fatal. Although tapping on a pipe or a wall is also OK, a whistle is better.

10.) BASIC TOOLS, BUT AT LEAST A WRENCH & PLIERS

11.) MOIST TOWELETTES, GARBAGE BAGS & PLASTIC TIES FOR SANITATION

12.) FEMININE SUPPLIES & PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS

13.) PAPER CUPS, PAPER PLATES, PLASTIC UTENSILS AND PAPER TOWELS

14.) MATCHES IN A WATER-PROOF CONTAINER

15.) FIRE EXTINGUISHER

16.) PET FOOD & EXTRA WATER FOR YOUR PET

17.) EXTRA CLOTHING—A complete change of clothing for everyone in your family, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. It is advisable to keep sturdy shoes next to your bed should an earthquake occur in the middle of the night. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold climate.

18.) SLEEPING BAGS AND BLANKETS—One sleeping bag or warm blanket per person. Consider having additional bedding on hand if you live in a cold climate.

19.) IMPORTANT FAMILY DOCUMENTS—Copies of driver's licenses or State ID cards, birth and marriage records, bank statements, wills and insurance policies should be stored in a waterproof, portable container. Some people also like to store copies of especially treasured family photographs as well, but be practical in this regard.

20.) PAPER AND PENCIL (or PEN)

21.) CASH AND COINS (for change for vending machines and pay phones) AND TRAVELER'S CHEQUES

22.) LOCAL MAPS

23.) BOOKS, GAMES, PUZZLES OR OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

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II.) PLANNING AHEAD FOR POTENTIAL EMERGENCIES

THE 7 WAYS TO SAFETY

Your family or group may NOT be together when disaster strikes, so you must all plan how you will contact each other and review what each person will do in case of an emergency.

1.) DESIGNATE AN OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT PERSON—Find a family member or friend (who lives far enough away from your area so that he or she would not be impacted by the same event) who is willing to act as your contact. Offer to reciprocate for this person because "**WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER**". Make sure that every family or group member carries the contact person's, as well as each other's, phone numbers (home, work, pager and cell) and e-mail addresses at all times. Also, leave the contact person's information at all schools your children attend, at the daycare providers for the elderly or disabled members of your family, and at your and at your spouse's workplaces. Everyone should always know what to do, who to call, where to reunite (see below), and to be patient if telephones are not working. Phone lines are often jammed during a crisis, but e-mails can sometimes slip through. It is very possible that pay phones will work during an emergency if you pay with coins, and not a phone card.

If this person is a trusted family member or friend, consider leaving a set of copies of your important documents, such as driver's licenses or State ID cards, birth and marriage records, bank statements, wills and insurance policies in a sealed envelope, or in a portable, waterproof container, with this person.

2.) LOCATE AND ESTABLISH A MEETING PLACE—Find a place away from your house and/or neighborhood which everyone knows will be the place to reunite in an emergency. This will save time, worry, and minimize confusion, especially during a crisis. Try to make arrangements with a family member or friend whose home can be made available to you. Again, please offer to reciprocate, as "**WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER**". In some cases, you may need to designate two places; if so, make sure each family or group member knows which his or her destination is. Include plans for your pets, as no Red Cross shelter, and few hotels or motels will accept pets, even in emergencies.



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3.) WHAT IS THE EMERGENCY PLAN FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL, AND/OR YOUR ELDERLY PARENTS' OR DISABLED FAMILY MEMBER'S DAYCARE PROVIDERS?

Make sure any school any child attends, or any elder care/disabled adult daycare provider you may use, has up-to-date information on you and your spouse. They should also have your family's contact person information.

Ask these questions of any school and/or facility:

a.) Exactly who in your family can sign the child out of school, or the adult out of daycare?

b.) Can I add someone else to the list? If so, how can I do this?

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c.) What are the release plans of the school and/or daycare facility? You need to know if they will keep your child at school, and/or your adult family member at their center, until you, your spouse, or a designated family member or friend can pick up your relatives.

d.) How will they communicate with parents or guardians during a crisis?

e.) What will they do if they can't reach you or your spouse?

f.) Do they store adequate food, water and other basic supplies?

g.) Are they are prepared to "shelter-in-place" if need be?

h.) Do they have an evacuation plan, and where they will take your child or adult family member if this happens?

During an emergency, a school will especially be overwhelmed with calls, and the office inundated with concerned parents. Make plans in advance of an emergency, especially where your children are concerned.

4.) WHAT ABOUT YOUR WORKPLACE, AND DOES YOUR EMPLOYER HAVE YOUR CURRENT INSURANCE AND MEDICAL INFORMATION?

It does not matter whether you own your business, are a manager, or are an employee, everybody at work should be aware of what to do in case of an emergency. This includes knowing where to find essential supplies, and contact and emergency information for everybody. Again, an emergency situation affects everybody, and danger pulls no rank.

a.) Is there an emergency plan for your workplace? Is it practiced?

b.) Will someone try to reach your spouse or next of kin?

c.) Is adequate food, water and other basic supplies being stored and refreshed over time?

d.) Are there preparations to "shelter-in-place" if need be?

e.) Is there an evacuation plan?

Consider having a set of copies of your important documents, such as driver's licenses or State ID cards, birth and marriage records, bank statements, wills and insurance policies in a sealed envelope or in a portable, waterproof container, at your office.

In addition, your employer should be current on who your beneficiaries are, as well as what medical conditions you may have. In the event of a severe emergency, you and your spouse may be both badly wounded or even killed. Each of your employers should have a record of your family's contact person, updated insurance information, and know of any pre-existing medical conditions you may have in the event that neither you nor your spouse is capable of speaking to a first responder.

Every emergency medical technician (EMT) asks for basic information before attempting to treat a patient. Examples of questions EMTs always ask include:

a.) Does the patient have any allergies?

b.) Does the patient have a history of high blood pressure or heart disease?

c.) Is the patient currently taking any medications, either prescription or over-the-counter (OTC)? Always keep a list of medications you are taking in your wallet or purse.

You might be thinking that this is an invasion of your privacy. But you're not being asked to advertise your conditions in the company newsletter. Your firm's personnel director, even if you are the boss, should be the only person to have regular and easy access to your file. Of course, your company's emergency plan will include one or two back up people who will

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have the ability to obtain access in the event of a crisis. After all, EMTs must know all they can before treating a patient. It could be the difference between life and death.

5.) IS YOUR INSURANCE UP TO DATE?

As part of Neighborhood Watch, you have previously learned about keeping detailed records of valuables, including photographs of them, and etching your state and drivers license number on your items. The reasons for this can be found in the Operation I.D. portion of the Home And Personal Security Handbook, published by NNWI. This material could come in handy if your home is damaged as the result of an emergency situation. **However, it is important to note that many Homeowners' Insurance policies do not completely cover you in the event of certain emergencies.** You need to speak to your agent and/or insurance company to determine exactly what is covered by any policy you own. This will allow you to make an informed decision.

DO NOT ASSUME THAT YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE COVERED!

There have been thousands of tragic stories told in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Many people who thought they had blanket coverage in the event of an emergency sadly discovered that they did not. Many people relied on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As we now know, after Hurricane Katrina, many people did not receive all the help that they needed, especially in a timely manner.

DON'T ASSUME THAT FEMA WILL AUTOMATICALLY HELP YOU!

Special earthquake, fire, flood, hurricane, landslide and/or mudslide, thunderstorms and/or lightning, tornado, tsunami, volcanic-related, wildfire, and winter storm coverage and protection, may not be in your existing policy. **This is especially true of earthquake, mudslide and flood damage (from any reason or source)**. If you are not completely covered, you might want to consider your options. While some emergencies we will discuss are rare in your area, exactly how unlikely will it be for you to ever experience flooding in your home or business?

6.) PLAN FOR YOUR PET

Your pet normally relies on you for food, water and basic care, and this obviously won't change during an emergency. However, you need to take steps to insure your pet's safety, and that it will have a place to go in case you and/or your family or group is evacuated.

While many people understand that your pet is important to you, and realize that you may even consider it a member of your family, you must realize that **your pet will not be accepted at any Red Cross shelter**, many private shelters, or at many motels and hotels. This may seem cruel, but try to understand that many people have allergies to animals; that sanitary conditions may preclude any animal from being on the premises; or that matters may be too chaotic during a crisis for anyone, even yourself, to be able to properly care for your pet.

Besides storing adequate food and water for your pet, you should:

a.) Obtain the names and addresses of nearby motels or hotels that will allow you to bring your pet with you when you check in, under any circumstances. Some may relent during a crisis, but don't bank on it.

b.) Find a local kennel or boarding facility with emergency preparations in place, and which will agree to let you bring your pet to them either before an imminent threat, or possibly even during a crisis.

c.) The name of an out-of-town contact person who will agree to board your pet for you during an emergency. Again, please offer to reciprocate, as "**WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER**".

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7.) GET INFORMED, BE INFORMED, STAY INFORMED

The next best way for you to get prepared is to do something that we all should be doing everyday anyway, but sometimes take for granted. What is this? Simply read, watch, and listen to the news.

Yes, read, watch, and listen to the news. The actual, real news and not the gossip or tabloid shows and magazines. There's a good reason this nation's Founding Fathers put "Freedom Of The Press" in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Staying informed has always been the first and best sign of a good citizen in a thriving democracy.

It's a real shame just how many of us don't seem to be interested in "all of the bad news" that is reported, and complain about "all of the crime and such" on the TV news. While real journalists never make up the facts, tabloid editors do worry about creating newsstand headlines which "grab" the reader; and managers at TV stations worry about ratings, and seem to have their newsreaders and field reporters only cover what's "sexy, hot, and sensational". Is this the practice of every newspaper and TV station? Certainly not, but it is prevalent.

Some internet sites are not much better; in fact, many are worse. There are sites that don't really care if they actually report the truth as long as the site looks and sounds good, and attracts "hits". Is this true of all internet "news" sites? Probably not, but it's true of many.

Why limit yourself to just one source of news? The more facts you know, the better informed you are, and, yes, the smarter you become—at any age. The bottom line is that there is a lot of news every single day, and the more sources you have for it, the better. There's an old saying: "Knowledge Is Power." Believe it.

Before you know it, your surroundings will become more familiar to you. Even if you have lived in the same area your entire life, you will suddenly feel more connected to your hometown. With some additional research, perhaps, you will learn which emergencies are even possible in your area. You may even discover that it's more (or less) than you imagined. Keeping up on current events will allow you to have the most advance warning that a crisis could be brewing; whether it is weather-related, or something potentially sinister. During an actual emergency, you will be depending on your battery-operated radio, TV and NOAA weather-band radio for crucial information which just may save your life, and the lives of your family and friends. This vital information will tell you of an approaching storm, if you need to "shelter-in-place", and what the current conditions are in your area. Finally, this information will let you know with certainty when it is safe again.

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TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

(in alphabetical order):

BLACKOUTS

As we know, a blackout can occur at any time something goes wrong at your local conventional power plant. The power grid was disrupted for some reasonable reason like a traffic accident, a train derailment, a plane crash, or even by a blown fuse.

Your community may also be experienced with **ROLLING BLACKOUTS**. These occur when your local conventional power company's power grid is overtaxed, and finds it cannot meet the demand of all of its customers. So, your local company will try to "spread out the pain" by alternating which customers will or will not receive power during unusually high usage periods. The **ROLLING BLACKOUTS** cease when supply can meet demand again. These times will usually occur during the summer (air conditioners) and winter (heaters and some furnaces).

HOW TO PREPARE FOR BLACKOUTS:

You should have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** at your disposal to help you and your family through the blackout. Turn off and unplug all electrical appliances and almost every light. You should leave just one small light on to let you know when your power is restored. Remember, when power is restored, power surges, or spikes in power, can damage the motors in your appliances. This is especially for computers. This is why we turn off and unplug all electrical appliances.

If you have medical conditions which make you rely on electrical power for your survival, such as a life-support system, oxygen, or a battery-powered wheelchair, you must notify your power provider immediately. Many power companies keep a list and a map of households which are power-dependent and try to keep them out of **ROLLING BLACKOUTS**. It is a good idea to have a manual wheelchair on hand, if possible. A talking, Braille, or large-print battery-operated clock are good ideas for those with vision difficulties. A small battery-operated TV, caption-enabled, should be considered for those with hearing problems.

Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you decide to use a generator, you must be certain the model you use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories (UL), or a similar organization. You should speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generators should never be run inside your house or garage, and always operated outdoors. Only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. NEVER connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Consider keeping a few plastic containers filled with water, (leaving about an inch of space inside each one for freezing), inside your refrigerator and freezer. It is not only extra water for later use, but while it remains frozen or cold, it will help keep the food surrounding it colder for a longer period of time. This is especially true if everyone remembers not to repeatedly open and close the refrigerator and freezer doors, as this will hasten the defrosting of the water and gradually warm your foods.

The "frozen water bottles" method has been known to keep food and medications, like insulin, cold for several hours during blackouts. If you're afraid your medicines will spoil anyway, you can always check with your doctor or pharmacist about this.

If you use an electric garage door opener, make sure you know where the manual lever is, and know how to use it. If your garage door is heavy, and you're not used to opening and closing it yourself, get help. Don't be embarrassed. You could be seriously hurt attempting to move a heavy door after not having done so for a long

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period of time. If you usually enter your home through your garage, always be sure to have your house key with you. This should guarantee you a way inside your home.

Try to keep at least one standard, "old-fashioned" telephone at home because wireless phones and answering machines use electricity. Learn where your most easily accessible phone jack is located, and practice plugging this "old" phone into it. Better still, always leave it plugged in; it is a phone, after all, and it will work. Cell phones, pagers or CB/ham radios are other backup plans.

Computer users should always back up files and software on a regular basis. Laptop computer users should have extra batteries and a power converter on hand. A power converter allows laptops (12 volts or less) to be plugged in to a vehicle's cigarette lighter. All computer devices, including computers, monitors, printers, scanners, copiers, etc. should always be turned off when not being used. This ensures that all computer equipment will have been safely shut down prior to any possible outage, saving all files and data. A high quality surge protector for all computer equipment is a good idea. Your local computer dealer may have other options for power outage problems.

WHAT TO DO DURING A BLACKOUT:

Do not use your phone unless it is necessary, and especially do not call 9-1-1 unless it is an actual life-or-death emergency. These lines are generally abused during blackouts, putting actual sick people at risk. Everybody already knows there is a blackout, and most are listening to their battery-powered radios or watching their battery-powered TVs for further information, just as you should be doing.

If you are in an office building, the elevators are probably not working. Even if one or two cars are running on emergency power, it is safest to take the stairs, as you may become stuck if the elevator car you're using suddenly stops running. Avoid traveling by car, as it is likely that most or all of the traffic signals in your area are not working. This will make driving very hazardous. Your local ATM is almost certainly not working, so, hopefully, you will be able to use some of the cash you have in your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, if need be.

If it is hot outside, try your best to keep cool by drinking plenty of water, even if you're not thirsty. Remember to give your pets enough water as well. Move to the lowest level of your home, as cool air settles towards the ground. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing, or as few articles of clothing as decently possible. If the blackout persists, consider going to a place within comfortable walking distance like an indoor mall or movie theatre where the air conditioning may be working. Again, try to avoid driving to these places.

If it's cold, you can keep warm by putting on more layers of clothing. Drink hot liquids. Never use your stove to keep warm, only for cooking. When the meal is prepared, turn the stove off. **Do not use any kind of gas-powered space heater, or a hibachi barbecue, or ever burn charcoal of any kind indoors.** These are all dangerous, can cause fires, or emit enough carbons to cause sickness or death. If the blackout persists, consider going to a relative, friend, or public area where the heat may be working. If you need to drive to a warmer location, be very careful, and go directly to your destination, with no stops in-between.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A BLACKOUT:

When the power is restored, listen to the initial news reports. Does your local conventional power company expect any more problems, or is the blackout or **ROLLING BLACKOUT** over for now? If it's really over, and not merely a temporary fix, it is now safe to plug back in all of your appliances, and use your computer again.

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EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes are sudden, rapid, and sometimes violent movements of the Earth's surface after energy is released in the Earth's crust, and the force of the released energy exceeds the strength of the crust. This causes the breaking and shifting of subterranean rock, putting pressure on the Earth's crust. While the Earth's crust can bend slightly, after excessive force, the crust breaks and snaps into a new position. The fractures in the Earth's crust are called **FAULTS**.

When **FAULTS** shift, vibrations called **SEISMIC WAVES** are generated, traveling through the Earth and along the surface and cause the movement we know as an earthquake. Earthquakes happen along **FAULTS** as they are the weak spots in the Earth's crust. When two pieces of crust move against each other, or when one piece slips below another, an earthquake occurs.

The Earth's crust is divided into giant pieces, much like a large jigsaw puzzle. The meeting places of these very large pieces (a.k.a. **CRUSTAL PLATES**) account for 95% of all earthquakes because these areas create the most potential for the pieces to move against each other, or, for one to slip below another. These locations are in California, Alaska, Japan, the Philippines and South America, commonly referred to as "The Ring Of Fire". But there are 45 states and territories throughout the United States that are considered moderate to high risk from earthquakes.

Over 600,000 earthquakes are measured worldwide each year, but only an average of 49,000 are ever felt by humans. Of these 49,000 earthquakes, about 1,000 have the energy to cause any real damage. Of these 1,000 earthquakes, about 120 can be destructive. Scientists estimate that of these 120, about 70 can become deadly.

The largest earthquake ever recorded in the United States occurred in Alaska on March 27, 1964. It had a magnitude of 9.2 on the Richter scale, and shaking was felt for an estimated 7 full minutes. It moved the ground as little as 6.5 feet in some places, and as much as 56 feet in others. The length of the ruptured fault was between 310.5 miles and 621 miles; and the amount of energy released was equal to 12,000 1945 Hiroshima or Nagasaki atomic bomb blasts, or 240 million tons of TNT. 115 people died; mostly due to the tsunami the quake generated.

As traumatic, unnerving and potentially deadly as a strong earthquake can be, many thousands more have died in smaller quakes than those that have occurred in the U.S. This is because that soon after the Long Beach, CA. quake of 1933, any new building constructed in California had to be designed and built to withstand earthquakes. Older buildings were either demolished or retro-fitted to those levels. As time passed, and technology advanced, the building codes were strengthened, and structures had to keep pace, or be razed.

Scientists continue to conduct research in attempts to learn how to predict earthquakes, but so far, earthquakes are still impossible to predict. As a side note, there is absolutely no proof that weather conditions or animal behavior can predict when an earthquake will occur. These are urban myths.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN EARTHQUAKE:

You should have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** at your disposal to help you and your family through any earthquake. After following the instructions already listed in this manual, the next best way to become prepared for an earthquake is to really get to know your own house.

Choose a place in every room where it would be possible for a family member to crawl under a desk or table, or lean against an inside wall. This is your best defense against flying debris, falling furniture and fixtures, or, in extreme cases, even the crumbling down of your home.

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Practice DCH—Drop; Cover Your Eyes, Hold On. At least 3-4 times a year, you and your family should practice dropping under that desk or table at home, covering your eyes with your forearm, and holding on to the leg or base of the desk or table as the earthquake passes. This location should not be near a large mirror or any windows. If you are choosing an inside wall, be sure it is away from bookcases, light fixtures, mirrors, windows and other tall furniture that could potentially fall on you.

At work, find a place in your office, or work area, where you think it would be safest to be in the event of an earthquake. This could be under your desk, against an inside wall, or even in the doorway, with your arms against the doorjambs and your eyes closed. The worst places to be while at an office building during an earthquake are directly outside the building, at exits or along exterior walls. Most earthquake-related deaths and injuries are due to falling walls, flying glass or debris.

Don't forget to practice at work as well. If your employer does not hold regular earthquake drills, well, he or she should; it can be made part of the fire drill that buildings undergo every so often. It can be at any time the employer wants it to be, as long as it is done.

Here are some ways you can help minimize damage to your home, and potential injury to you and your loved ones:

a.) Learn how to turn off electricity, gas and water.

b.) Securely fasten shelves to walls, and keep large or heavy objects on lower shelves.

c.) Store breakable items in lower cabinets with doors and latches, and replace any small or flimsy-looking locks with strong latches.

d.) Securely store any toxic or flammable items in cabinets with doors and latches.

e.) Attach bookcases, china cabinets and other tall pieces of furniture into wall studs with screws.

f.) Secure your water heater by strapping it to wall studs and bolting it to the floor.

g.) Inspect and repair electrical wiring and gas connections, as these can be potential fire hazards during an earthquake.

h.) Check your home or building for structural defects and repair cracks in your ceiling and foundation.

i.) Consult with recognized construction experts who regularly inspect building foundations. They will probably be able to bolt your house to its foundation, if it has not already been done. In addition, they are trained to notice potentially hazardous conditions that can be easily remedied.

WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE:

DCH—Drop; Cover Your Eyes, Hold On. Move only a few steps to get to the designated safe place in the room, and stay there, eyes covered until the shaking stops. Earthquakes usually only last 15-25 seconds, but can feel much longer. If you are in bed, stay there, and cover your head and eyes with your pillow (without interfering with your ability to breathe) until the shaking stops. If you are inside an office building, get to your safe place, and understand that fire alarms and sprinklers will come on during the earthquake.

If you are outside, find an open space away from buildings, trees, power lines and overpasses. If space permits, and only if space permits, lie down on the street next to the curb for optimum safety from flying debris. However, DO NOT put yourself in a tight spot between parked cars, as the brakes on one or both of those cars could fail during a severe earthquake, and seriously injure you.

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If you are driving during an earthquake, at first, it will feel as though your car is somehow sputtering, or running out of gas, but you will quickly realize what is happening. Slow down, and, if it is at all possible, drive to the side of the road. But make sure you are not stopping on a bridge or overpass. Remember to stay clear of buildings, trees, and especially stay clear of power lines. **ALWAYS AVOID ALL DOWNED POWER LINES—-THEY ARE 'LIVE' AND THEIR SHOCK WILL KILL YOU.**

WHAT TO DO AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE:

Expect **AFTERSHOCKS**, the series of smaller quakes, or even larger ones, which always follow significant earthquakes, as they will certainly occur. **When AFTERSHOCKS strike, drop, cover and hold on, as before.**

Also, expect landslides or mudslides if you live in an area that has experienced such events before. Earthquakes are especially good at producing such slides for obvious reasons: the ground shakes, and debris is formed. Gravity will bring the debris downhill when the debris forms in a place which cannot support it. Be aware of landslides or mudslides after any quake.

When it is safe to do so, look at the area around you, and be sure it is safe for you to move around. Once it is safe, check on your family, look around your home, and if you smell gas, immediately turn off the gas main, open the windows, and get everybody outside.

If you don't smell gas, and your home looks safe to occupy, follow these basic steps:

a.) Look for and extinguish any small fires.

b.) Unplug unnecessary appliances, turn off all unnecessary lights, and try to eliminate any other potential hazards.

c.) Record the damage with either a still camera or a videotape recorder.

d.) Clean up any broken glass, other debris, and cover any broken windows and mirrors with old blankets, or even with old newspaper and tape.

e.) Always remember to be prepared for **AFTERSHOCKS**; for the next several hours, up to 2-3 days, they are imminent. Thus, do not put any items in the way of anyone's designated safe place.

If you are asked to evacuate, there is a good reason for it. Do not argue. Be sure to find out exactly which roads are to be used, as some of your regular routes may now be blocked, are unusable, or even destroyed. Wear long-sleeved shirts and blouses, jeans, and strong, but comfortable, shoes. If there is time, be sure to notify your out-of-town contact person where you are going, and when you might be expected to arrive. When you leave your home, make sure the gas main remains off, your appliances are all unplugged, the phone ringer is off, your windows are closed, your doors locked, and you have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**. Don't forget about your pets. You, your family and your pets should be heading to your previously designated place, or to a hotel or motel which you already **know** will accept your pets.

If you have been asked to help an elderly or disabled member of your Neighborhood Watch, please remember that person is relying on you. If, for any reason, you are now unable to help this person, contact your back up, it is your responsibility. Take it seriously!

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FIRES

We all learned about fire as small children. It is hot, and needs fuel and oxygen to keep burning. Your home is the fuel; the air is obviously the oxygen. Fire spreads quickly, and there is no time to gather valuables or make a phone call. In two minutes, a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames.

The heat and smoke from fire can be even more dangerous than the flames. Inhaling the super-hot air can sear your lungs, while the smoke can choke off your air supply. Fire produces poisonous gases which make a person drowsy and disoriented. Instead of being awakened by a fire, a person may fall into a deeper sleep. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire-related deaths, exceeding burns by a 3 to 1 ratio. Over 4,000 Americans die in home fires each year, while more than 20,000 are injured. Direct property loss due to these fires is estimated at $10 billion annually. Yet, many of these fires are very preventable.

HOW TO PREVENT FIRES:

There are three easy ways to be prepared for home fires. Each one is important, and the foundation of each step is good old-fashioned common sense:

a.) Use Properly Working Smoke Alarms and Consider Other Safety Tools

b.) Plan At Least Two Escape Routes, And Hold Practice Fire Drills

c.) Practice Fire Prevention

a.) Use Properly Working Smoke Alarms and Consider Other Safety Tools: The very best way to prevent a home fire is to have a series of properly working smoke alarms inside your residence. Having the alarms immediately decreases the chances of someone dying from fire inside your home by 50 percent.

There should be a properly working smoke alarm outside of each sleeping area and on each level of your home. If people sleep with doors closed, put smoke alarms inside those sleeping areas as well. The alarms should be installed on the ceiling or high on the wall (4 to 12 inches from the ceiling), at the top of stairways, or at the bottom of enclosed stairs, and near, but not in, the kitchen.

Use the test button to check each smoke alarm every month. When necessary, replace the batteries immediately; but remember to always replace all smoke alarm batteries at least once a year. Many fire departments recommend that a person plan this activity during a time change, like Daylight Savings Time, as this serves as a good reminder. It is also a good idea to clean away any cobwebs and dust from your smoke alarms each month when checking on the batteries.

Be aware that smoke alarms become less sensitive over time, and each unit usually has a reliable lifespan of about 10 years.

You could also have one or more working fire extinguishers in your home. Ask the business you purchase the units from where you can get lessons in how to use the extinguishers, or ask your local fire department if they can help you.

Consider escape ladders if your residence has more than one level, learn how to use them, and store then near windows.

If it is affordable for your family, you might also consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your home. You certainly have fire extinguishers and automatic sprinklers at your business...right?

b.) Plan At Least Two Escape Routes, And Hold Practice Fire Drills: Your family should determine at least two ways to escape from every room of your home, and practice runs should be held at least twice a year. Everybody should be taught how to crawl near to the floor, with a wet cloth covering the mouth and nose, should an actual fire start.

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Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut, and that any security gates, burglar bars and other antitheft mechanisms on windows have a working fire safety opening feature so that they can be easily opened from the inside.

c.) Practice Fire Prevention: Cooking is the leading cause of home fires, and fire-related injuries in the United States. Before preparing to cook, make sure that the cooking surfaces are clean. Never leave your cooking unattended, as a serious fire can start in just seconds. When cooking, always wear short or tight-fitting sleeves, and keep towels, pot holders and curtains away from all flames and heating elements. Use extra caution when preparing deep-fried foods, and heat oil gradually to avoid burns from spattering grease. If a fire breaks out while cooking, put a lid on the pan to smother it. Never throw water on a grease fire, as it will ignite the fire as opposed to dousing it. Do not use the range, oven or stove to heat your home, and double-check before going to sleep or leaving the house, making sure all appliances are turned off.

Never use any flammable liquids like gasoline, kerosene, benzene or naphtha indoors. Keep all of these in approved metal containers in well-ventilated storage areas. Never smoke near flammable liquids. Discard all rags or materials that have been soaked in flammable liquids after you have used them, as well as any fireplace ashes, safely, outdoors in a metal can.

Insulate chimneys and place spark arresters on top. The chimney should be at least three feet higher than the roof. Remove branches hanging above and around the chimney, and be sure to use a metal screen in front of your fireplace.

Always be careful when using alternative heating sources. Check with your local fire department before using kerosene heaters in your community. If they're legal, always be sure to fill cooled-down kerosene heaters outside. Keep the heaters away

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from flammable materials, and make certain that nearby walls and the floor are properly insulated. Only use the type of fuel designated for your unit and always follow the manufacturer's instructions, and have your unit inspected and cleaned by a certified professional every year.

Keep matches and lighters away from children, preferably up high, or in a locked cabinet. If you must smoke, never smoke in bed if you're drowsy or under any medication. Make sure to have deep and sturdy ashtrays, and douse all cigarette and cigar butts with water before trashing them.

You should have the electrical wiring in your home checked by a certified electrician, making sure insulation does not touch bare electrical wiring, among other details. This should be done as soon as you move into a new residence, or every few years.

In addition, make sure all extension cords are checked for frayed or exposed wires and loose plugs; that all outlets have cover plates and no exposed wiring; that no wires are running under carpets, over nails, or across high-traffic areas, and that extension cords and/or outlets are never overloaded. If you need to plug in multiple appliances at once, get a UL-approved unit with built-in circuit breakers to prevent sparks and short circuits.

WHAT TO DO DURING FIRES:

If a fire occurs, you must exit the building immediately. If there is smoke, crawl low, as smoke and heat rises, and any potential poisonous gas collects first along the ceiling. Use a wet cloth, if possible, to cover your nose and mouth. **Use the back of your hand to feel the upper, lower, and middle parts of closed doors.** Never use the palm of your hand or fingers to test for heat, as burning those areas could endanger your ability to escape a fire by impairing your ability to use a ladder or to crawl.

If the door is **not hot**, brace yourself against it and open slowly. Check and make sure smoke and/or fire is not blocking your escape route. If the way is clear, leave immediately through the door and close it behind you. If you're blocked, shut the door immediately, and use an alternate escape route, like a window.

If the door is **hot, do not open it.** Look for another way outside. Never attempt to use an elevator during a fire. If smoke, heat or flames block all your exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed. Signal for help using a bright-colored cloth at the window. If there is a working telephone in the room, call the fire department and alert them to your location.

If you catch fire, do not run; it most likely will fuel the fire as it gains more oxygen as you run through the air. Stop; Drop, and Roll to put out the fire.

If you are at home, go to your family's designated meeting place. Account for your family or group members, as soon as possible, and carefully supervise all small children.

Never go back inside a burning building for any reason. Call the fire department from a neighbor's house if someone has not yet called 9-1-1.

WHAT TO DO AFTER FIRES:

If you are with burn victims, or if you are burned, cool and cover the injuries to reduce the chance of further injury or infection, and wait for the paramedics to arrive.

If you detect heat or smoke when entering a damaged building, evacuate at once. If you are a tenant, contact the landlord.

If you have a safe or a strong box, do not try to open it for several hours after a fire. It can hold intense heat for at least that long, and opening the safe's door, or the strong box, before time could very well result in the contents bursting into flames.

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FLOODS

Floods are America's most common natural disaster, and actually kill more people, on average, than any other weather-related event. Floods can happen in every U.S. state and territory, but they are not all alike. Some floods can develop slowly during an extended period of rain, or can occur in a warming trend following a heavy snow. **FLASH FLOODS** can happen quickly, even without any visible signs of rain.

Floods can roll boulders the size of cars, tear out trees, and destroy buildings, roads and bridges. You should be prepared for flooding no matter where you live, but especially if you reside in a low-lying area, near water, or downstream from a dam. Even a very small stream or dry creek bed can overflow and create flooding.

There is a lot of fact and fiction about floods, and we will now review some common misconceptions about them:

1. A 100-year flood occurs only once every 100 years.

The truth is that the 100-year flood is a climatic average; there is always at least a 1 percent chance that a 100-year flood will occur during any given year.

2. FLASH FLOODS mainly occur in the eastern United States.

The truth is that FLASH FLOODS occur in all 50 states.

3. FLASH FLOODS occur only along flowing streams.



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The truth is that FLASH FLOODS can occur in dry arroyos and urban areas where no streams are present.

4. FLASH FLOODS occur mainly in the late afternoon and evening.

The truth is that although many FLASH FLOODS occur at night, not all of them do.

5. Homeowners insurance policies cover flooding.

The truth is that most Homeowners Insurance Policies DO NOT include flood coverage unless you have specifically asked for it, and have been approved for it, by your insurance company.

6. You can't buy Flood Insurance if your home, apartment or business has ever been flooded.

The truth is that even if are turned down by all regular insurance companies, you can still possibly buy coverage for your home, apartment or business if your community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

7. Larger vehicles, such as SUVs and pickup trucks are safe to drive through flood waters.

The truth is that as little as 2 feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including SUVs and pickups.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A FLOOD:

Have your BASIC EMERGENCY KIT prepared, and consider adding raingear, including galoshes, to it for everyone in your family or group. This is also a very good time to be sure the batteries in your battery-powered radio, TV and NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration, aka National Weather Service) radio are fresh and working properly.

Especially when there is danger of a flood, your NOAA radio, equipped with a Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) feature, will help you and your family or group. The radio will automatically alert you when a **FLOOD/ FLASH FLOOD WATCH or FLOOD/ FLASH FLOOD WARNING** is issued for your county or parish. It has seven frequencies, known as Channels 1-7, which give the quickest and most accurate weather-related data available. It is most likely how your local news is getting their information, unless they have a reporter inside the National Weather Service during the event.

If your furnace, water heater, or electric panel is in a lower level of your home, consider elevating them higher off the ground. You should consider installing "check valves" to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.

If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building and seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds. Have sandbags prepared, and put them around the perimeter of your home or business when a FLOOD/FLASH FLOOD WATCH is issued.

Prepare an evacuation plan for your home and business, which include alternate routes, should the roads you usually use are washed-out by the flood. Again, try to have at least a half of tank of gas in your vehicle.

Know your surroundings, and your actual risk of flooding. If you're unsure, ask your local law enforcement office or your local Red Cross chapter.

DO NOT ASSUME YOU ARE SAFE

Discuss flood plans with everyone in your family or group, just as you would prior to any emergency. Everyone should know what to do in case all family members are not together. This lets everyone know how to respond, and helps reduce fear and anxiety during the actual crisis.

This is a final warning about Flood Insurance, because so very many people are financially wiped out each year by not really understanding the danger of being underinsured. **You abso-**

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lutely must check with your insurance agent or insurance company to see if you have Flood Insurance. Chances are high that unless you have specifically asked for this coverage, and have been approved for it by your insurance company in writing, **YOU ARE NOT COVERED.** The word of your agent is NOT sufficient, even if he or she is your relative.

If you discover you are not covered, try to buy this insurance if you can afford it. As it normally takes 30 days for a Flood Insurance policy to go into effect, you cannot wait until you hear that a flood may be on the way before attempting to buy this insurance. You can also check with your city or county government and see if they participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Start with your local Building Department or Planning Department to review the Flood Insurance Rate Maps which are published by FEMA. There is a high probability that FEMA will not help you after a crisis if you could have afforded the National Flood Insurance, and chose not to participate. You will most likely be asked to prove that you could not afford to buy into the program in order to get government aid. Think about this.

You should also familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify the different kinds of floods and flooding hazards, and know the differences between a FLOOD/FLASH FLOOD WATCH and a FLOOD/FLASH FLOOD WARNING.

1.) FLASH FLOODS: This is a rapid rise of water along a stream or low-lying urban area. Most damage, injury and fatalities tend to occur in areas immediately adjacent to a stream or arroyo. This is due to a combination of heavy rain, dam break, levee failure, and rapid snowmelt. Heavy rain falling on steep terrain can weaken soil and cause mudslides, damaging homes, roads and property.

Densely populated areas are at a high risk for **FLASH FLOODS** because the construction of buildings, highways, driveways, and parking lots increases runoff by reducing the amount of rain absorbed by the ground. This runoff increases the **FLASH FLOOD** potential.

In many cities and towns, streams are routed underground into storm drains. But during heavy rains, these storm drains may become overwhelmed, flooding roads and buildings. Low spots, like underpasses, underground parking garages, and basements can become death traps.

Embankments, or levees, are built along rivers and are used to prevent high water from flooding bordering land. We have seen what happens when levees fail, as they did in New Orleans in 2005.

Do you live near one of the 76,000-plus dams currently used in the United States? 80% of these dams are earth fill construction. These densely packed-dirt dams are nevertheless more easily compromised by heavy rainfall than are concrete structures. Two infamous dam failures are: the 1889 Johnstown, PA. flood which killed 2,200 people; and the 1972 Buffalo Creek Dam failure in southern West Virginia which sent raging water through one small coal mining town after another, leaving 100 dead and over 4,000 homeless. The Johnstown Flood has been immortalized in songs by artists ranging from Woody Guthrie to Bruce Springsteen.

Know how close you live to a stream, even a small one. Flooding can be caused by rain several miles upstream and then rapidly moving downstream. Many people enjoy outdoor fun like hiking, fishing, or camping along streams and rivers. Feel free to enjoy yourselves, just don't park alongside rivers and streams, and listen to weather forecasts on a regular basis; especially if you think the weather is changing from sunny to gloomy. Keep away from streams if storms have recently happened or have been predicted upstream from where you plan your activities. A mountain creek only 6 inches deep can swell to a 10-foot deep raging river in less than an hour if a storm inundates the area with intense rainfall.

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If you are camping near a stream when a storm begins, leave as quickly as possible. Note changing conditions as you pack; the stream may start to rise and become muddy. You may hear a roaring sound upstream that may be a flood wave moving rapidly towards you. Head immediately for higher ground, or face being swept away by the fast-moving water.

About 50 percent of all FLASH FLOOD fatalities occur in vehicles. Many people just won't believe that two feet of water on a bridge or highway will float most vehicles. Fast moving water will sweep a car, truck, or SUV off a bridge and into a creek.

Water often erodes the road bed, creating unsafe driving conditions. Underpasses can fill rapidly with water, while adjacent roadways remain clear. Driving into a flooded underpass can quickly immerse your vehicle in 5 to 6 feet of water. Worst of all, many floods happen at night when flooded roads are hard to see.

When you approach a flooded road,

TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!

2.) RIVER FLOODS: River flooding is often caused by excessive rain from tropical weather systems making landfall and by persistent thunderstorms over the same area for extended periods of time.

When a strong tropical storm moves inland, it typically produces heavy rain. Even if the storm is slowly dying out, it can still produce 20-40 inches over several days. Widespread flash flooding and river flooding can result. A hurricane can also produce a deadly **STORM SURGE** that inundates coastal areas as it makes landfall. A **STORM SURGE** is water pushed on shore by the force of the winds swirling around the storm. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides to create the **HURRICANE STORM TIDE** which can increase the water level by at least 15 feet. The worst natural disaster in U.S. history, in terms of loss of life, was caused by a storm surge and associated coastal flooding which occurred in Galveston, TX in 1900. 8,000 people or more lost their lives; a final tally was not possible.

3.) FLOOD WATCH OR FLASH FLOOD WATCH: This is an announcement that there is a possibility of flooding or a flash flood in your area. When a **FLOOD WATCH** is issued, you should be aware of potential flood hazards, and ready to respond and act quickly. You should be prepared to evacuate, making sure that you always have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** with you.

If there is time, move all of your valuables to a secure spot in a higher level of your home, like a cabinet with a lock, and move all of your outdoor furniture inside. Unplug all of your electrical appliances, and move as many as possible to a higher level of your home.

DO NOT TOUCH ANY ELECTRIC APPLIANCE IF YOU ARE WET OR STANDING IN WATER.

Finally, use this time to fill your gas tank (and your spouse's) and to stock up on any supplies your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** may be lacking. As a reminder, you should at least have a supply of bottled water, canned food, batteries, medications, especially prescription drugs, and First Aid supplies. Before leaving your home, remember to lock all of the doors and windows, turn off all of the lights, and the ringers on your telephones, and remember your pets, and the plans you've already made for them. If you have been asked to help an elderly or disabled member of your Neighborhood Watch, please remember that person is relying on you. If, for any reason, you are now unable to help this person, contact your back up, it is your responsibility.
Take it seriously!

4.) FLOOD WARNING OR FLASH FLOOD WARNING: This means that flooding is already occurring, or will soon occur in your area. Listen to local radio and TV stations, and to your NOAA radio for information and advice. If told to evacuate, do so as quickly as possible. Be alert to the signs

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of **FLASH FLOODING;** if you think it has already started, get out quickly! You may only have seconds to escape. Move quickly to higher ground, away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains, using only roads you know are safe. Do not drive around barricades. They are there for your safety. If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground. Don't forget to take your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** with you.

WHAT TO DO DURING A FLOOD:

Pay attention, after you have received the **FLOOD/FLASH FLOOD WARNING**, if you have been advised to evacuate, do so immediately! If you can avoid driving to evacuate, it is advisable. If you must drive, families should try to use only one vehicle to avoid getting separated, and to reduce traffic jams. You need to move to a safe area before access to it is cut off by flood water. Using your car's radio, or your battery-powered radio, TV or NOAA radio, you should be hearing the latest information on where the flooding is, and the safest routes away from it.

Stay away from areas subject to flooding like dips, low spots, canyons, washes, etc. Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers. Do not attempt to drive through a flooded road, or through barricades. The depth of water is not always obvious. As previously explained, the road bed may be damaged, or washed out, and your vehicle could get trapped, leaving you stranded. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle with you and your family inside, sweeping you all away. Again, vehicles can be swept away in as little as two feet of moving water.

Never try to walk, swim, drive or play in flood water. You may not be able to see how fast the flood water is moving or see holes or submerged debris. Children should NEVER play around high water, storm drains, viaducts or arroyos. It is very easy to be swept away by fast-moving water.

If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, STOP! Turn around and go another way. Climb to higher ground. Even six inches of water can knock you off your feet, if the water is moving swiftly. Many people are injured or killed each year in attempting to wade through flood waters.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A FLOOD:

If you have been hurt, get medical help at the nearest hospital. A local Red Cross shelter can help if your home is not inhabitable, or if you have not yet been allowed home by authorities.

The Red Cross shelter can also provide food, Basic First Aid, and either the funds to purchase new clothes, or provide you with recently donated clothing from your fellow citizens. If you can, please donate to the effort, because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER".**

Do not sightsee or gawk at disaster areas. You will get in the way of rescue and other emergency operations. If you see broken utility lines on your way back home, **ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THEY ARE 'LIVE' AND THEIR SHOCK WILL KILL YOU,** but please report them to local authorities. Do not assume that somebody else already has.

Keep listening to the radio for further reports, even if you have been told it is now safe for you to return to your home or business.

When you return to your home or office, do not enter it if it is partially underwater, or if you can see that water is still inside your house. Even if you only see a few inches of water on the floor, water may have seeped into cracks, and undermined the foundation of your home. This causes buildings to sink, floors to buckle, and walls to crack and collapse. If you are unsure, wait until you can get a city inspector to look your property over. You may even opt to hire a private, licensed professional inspector.

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Besides water damage to your foundation, other potential hazards include electrical system damage, water and sewer line damage, and gas line damage. If you suspect any of these problems, it is best not to stay at your home, and local authorities may not even let you, if you were so inclined to "rough it" for awhile. Hopefully, you have taken the step of securing the out-of-town contact person each household needs so that you and your family can stay with them until you can begin to sort things out at your own residence.

If your home has sustained damage, but not so much that it is uninhabitable, there are still some things to consider. First, open all the doors and windows, as the wind will help your home dry out faster. Shovel any mud out of your house while it is still wet, as it will be easier to do this way, and will also allow floors and walls to dry out quicker. As you work, be careful of creatures which the flood waters may have brought into your home. Have a long stick to poke them with which will ease them back outside. Do not pick up any creature with your hands, as they may be poisonous, or may carry dangerous germs which may cause illness.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator, you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, and for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generators should never be run inside your house or garage. Always operate it outdoors, and only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. NEVER connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Throw out any food that has touched flood waters. Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets.

DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH from your local gas, water and electricity providers.

If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

When you rebuild, make sure you follow local building codes and ordinances, and use flood-resistant materials and techniques to protect yourself and your property from future flood damage.



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HEAT WAVES

We have all experienced our share of heat waves, those extended periods of extreme heat, often accompanied by high humidity. We know that these conditions can be dangerous and even life-threatening for people who don't take the proper precautions.

Heat kills by taxing the human body beyond its abilities. On average, about 175 Americans die each year due to excessive summertime heat. This is more people than are killed each year by earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, lightning or tornadoes. Only the excessive cold of winter proves more deadly each year to people. Records compiled by the U.S. Government show that in the 40-year period between 1936 and 1975, almost 20,000 Americans were killed by heat. In the heat wave of 1980, 1,250 people died. All these people died as a direct result of heat, many countless more died from heart attacks and other health conditions made worse due to the heat. But no records are kept on these poor folks.

East of the Rocky Mountains, the heat is usually combined with high humidity; but people west of the Rocky Mountains also succumb to the dry heat experienced out there. As for Global Warming, whether you personally believe it is real or not, if it turns out to be true, the heat and humidity will only get worse, and there will most likely never be a chance for warm conditions to ever ease off anywhere in the world.

One of the first things to do is to learn and understand what the heat waves related terms are, and the difference between them.

1.) HEAT WAVE: Again, this is a prolonged period of excessive heat and humidity. The National Weather Service steps up its procedures to alert the public during these times due to the ever increasing fatality rate being suffered in the United States.

2.) HEAT INDEX: Devised by the National Weather Service, the **HEAT INDEX** is a number in Fahrenheit (F) degrees that tells how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature. For example, one's exposure to full sunshine can increase that person's heat index by 15 degrees Fahrenheit.

3.) HEAT DISORDERS: From fatigue in people in higher risk groups, (asthma, severe allergies, overweight, high blood pressure and/or other pre-existing medical conditions), and including sunburn, a **HEAT DISORDER** is any medical condition caused by, or worsened by, being in the Sun, or in a overheated area indoors. The **HEAT INDEX** under these scenarios is at least 80-90 degrees.

4.) HEAT CRAMPS: These are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion in the hot weather. This is usually one of the first signs that the body is having trouble with the heat. The **HEAT INDEX** in this situation is at 90 degrees and above.

5.) HEAT EXHAUSTION: When people exercise heavily or work in hot and humid places, body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. This increases blood flow to the person's skin, and away from the person's vital organs. This can result in a form of mild shock. If not treated, the victim may suffer **HEAT STROKE.** Some visible symptoms include cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating, headache, nausea or vomiting, dizziness, and exhaustion. However, the person's body temperature will actually be near normal. The **HEAT INDEX** in this situation is at anywhere between 90 degrees and 130 degrees.

6.) HEAT STROKE (a.k.a. SUNSTROKE): The victim's bodily temperature control system, which produces sweat to cool the body, stops working entirely due to the heat. This is life-threatening. The person's body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Some visible symptoms include hot and red skin, changes in conscious-

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ness, rapid, but weak pulse, and rapid, but shallow breathing. Body temperature can rise as high as 105 degrees Fahrenheit. If the person was sweating from heavy work or exercise, his skin may be wet; otherwise, it will feel dry. The **HEAT INDEX** in this situation is at anywhere between 90 degrees and 130-plus degrees.

As in any aspect of life, different people will react different ways to heat. Someone may become seriously ill at a lower heat index than expected, while someone else will possibly be able to withstand brutal heat without getting ill. Unlikely in the later case, but possible, nonetheless.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HEAT WAVE:

People living in large cities have to pay even closer attention in preparing for heat waves. Besides the heat and the humidity factors to contend with, air pollution makes the heat wave even more dangerous. The stagnant atmospheric conditions of the heat wave trap pollutants in urban areas, creating poor air quality, which for many, unfortunately, becomes the last straw.

Air conditioners become life savers in these situations, and for many elderly people, they are a must. But for older Americans and the poor, having an air conditioner may be an unaffordable luxury. Because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER",** wouldn't it be a great project for your Neighborhood Watch group to reach out to those among you who are less fortunate, and get them air conditioning? If your group cannot afford to provide units for everyone, how about creating one very large air-conditioned central room or banquet hall in your community, where people could congregate during severe heat?

Those people who are at high risk during heat waves, including the elderly, disabled, small children, asthma and/or allergy sufferers, those on certain medications or drugs (especially tranquilizers and anticholinergics), and persons with weight and alcohol problems have to pay close attention to preparing for heat waves.

This is especially true in usually moderate climates, where a heat wave might be particularly hard on everyone.

Besides having a working air conditioner, and making sure that your home is well insulated, which includes weather stripping around your doors and window sills (keeping in cool air, and keeping out heat), here are some tips on how to get through a heat wave:

a.) Drink plenty of fluids, even if you're not thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool. Water is always better than any caffeinated drink. Stay away from alcoholic beverages; this does include beer. **WARNING: People who are on fluid restricted diets, or have a problem with fluid retention, or have epilepsy, heart, kidney or liver disease should consult a physician before increasing their fluid intake.**

b.) Eat less food, especially proteins. Protein increases your metabolism, and also increases your water loss at the same time.

c.) Dress for summer; that is, wear light colored clothing as it reflects heat and sunlight, and help maintain normal body temperature.

d.) Strenuous work or play should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. This is usually between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m. Individuals at risk should stay in the coolest available place, even if that place is not necessarily indoors.

e.) If you have a cellar or basement, this is probably the coolest part of your home. If you don't have an air conditioner, perhaps you should consider staying downstairs, out of the sun, in your cellar or basement. If you do, bring food and water, and something to occupy your time. This will help you avoid having to repeatedly climb the stairs.

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f.) If you can afford a few electric fans, they will help. They will not cool the air, but they will help you sweat more, cooling your body.

g.) If you can't afford an air conditioner or electric fans, and you have no cellar or basement, try to go to an indoor mall, movie theatre, or other public building where you can cool down for several hours.

h.) While this should be obvious, don't get too much sun. Sun worshippers beware; sunburn makes it harder for your body temperature to stay at normal levels. You may think a suntan looks good; but besides the risk of future skin cancer, getting your tan is also taxing and prematurely aging your body.

i.) NEVER, EVER leave children or pets in a closed vehicle while "you just run in for a second" to a store, the cleaners, etc. We have all heard about the tragic consequences of children and pets being locked inside a vehicle. Even if you leave water with your children or your pets, the heat index inside a locked vehicle with little or no ventilation rises very quickly. Also, how often does a person's planned "seconds" turn into several minutes, or even, turn into hours? **Understand that helpless children and/or pets locked inside a vehicle are literally being roasted alive under the midday sun.**

WHAT TO DO DURING A HEAT WAVE:

If someone you're with is suffering from **HEAT CRAMPS,** you should get that person to some shady area, and get him or her to rest in a comfortable position. The person should lightly stretch the muscles which hurt, and drink fluids. The fluids should be half a glass of cool water every 15 minutes. If there's no cool water, do not give the victim any alcohol or any drinks containing caffeine. This will only make the condition get worse, instead of better.

If someone you're with is suffering from **HEAT EXHAUSTION,** you should get that person to some shady area, and get him or her to rest in a comfortable position. Then, have the person loosen or remove any tight clothing. If the victim can not do this, then help him. Then, you should apply cool, wet cloths, towels or sheets. If the person is conscious, give him or her cool water to drink. But make sure the person sips the water, or drinks very slowly. If there's no cool water, do not give the victim any alcohol or any drinks containing caffeine. Again, this will only make the condition get worse, instead of better.

Carefully watch for any changes in the victim's condition. If there's no improvement, call 9-1-1.

If someone you're with is suffering from **HEAT STROKE (a.k.a. SUNSTROKE),** dial 9-1-1 immediately. **HEAT STROKE** is life-threatening, and help is needed fast. Move the person to some shade, and quickly cool the body. Immerse the victim in a cool bath, or wrap soaking wet cool sheets around him or her, and then fan the victim. Keep the person lying down, and watch for any sign of breathing difficulties. If the victim refuses water, or is vomiting, do not give him or her anything to drink or eat. Watch for changes in the level of consciousness. Hopefully, an EMT is arriving about now.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A HEAT WAVE:

While still fresh in your mind, think about the lessons you have learned from this heat wave. What things made you more comfortable? What made you less comfortable? Make a list for yourself; put a copy in your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT,** and possibly make life easier for you and your family during the next heat wave. With the possibility of Global Warming being a real concern, the next heat wave is probably just around the corner.

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HURRICANES

Hurricanes are organized rotating weather systems which develop in the tropics, and have sustained surface winds in excess of 64 knots or 74 miles per hour. They rotate counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere. Both Hurricanes and Tornadoes are born from **TROPICAL DEPRESSION** and **TROPICAL STORMS**.

A **TROPICAL DEPRESSION** is an organized system of persistent clouds and thunderstorms, with a closed, low-level circulation and maximum sustained winds up to 33 knots or 38 miles per hour or less.

A **TROPICAL STORM** is an organized system of strong thunderstorms with a well defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 34 to 63 knots, or 39 to 73 miles per hour.

TROPICAL DEPRESSIONS and **TROPICAL STORMS,** while generally less dangerous than hurricanes, can still be real threats. The winds of **TROPICAL DEPRESSIONS** and **TROPICAL STORMS**, although potentially dangerous, pale in comparison to the threat posed by the heavy rains, flooding, and the severe weather they can create—like tornadoes. *(Tornadoes are discussed in a later section of this manual.)*

Over the course of a typical **HURRICANE SEASON,** which runs from June 1 to November 30 of each year, in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico, an average of 10 **TROPICAL DEPRESSIONS** become **TROPICAL STORMS**, and from these, about 6 hurricanes are created. In an average three year span, the United States coastline is hit by 5 hurricanes, 2 of which become classified as major hurricane events.

Hurricanes are products of a tropical ocean and a warm, moist atmosphere. Powered by heat from the sea, hurricanes are typically steered by high-level easterly winds while in the tropics. When hurricanes become very strong, they can create their own steering winds.

At least three conditions must be present for a tropical storm to develop into a hurricane.

a.) A weather disturbance gathers heat and energy from contact with the warm ocean water.

b.) Then, added moisture obtained from the evaporation of the sea surface powers the potential hurricane like a giant heat engine.

c.) Finally, the potential hurricane forms a wind pattern near the ocean surface that spirals air inward.

These three combined conditions cause bands of thunderstorms to develop, allowing the air to warm even more, and rise higher into the atmosphere. If the winds at these higher levels are relatively light, this will further strengthen the hurricane.

The center, or **EYE**, of a hurricane, is relatively calm with sinking air, light winds and few clouds. The most violent winds and rain take place in the **EYEWALL**, which is the ring of thunderstorms immediately surrounding the eye. The top of the **EYEWALL** is about 50,000 feet high and air is pushed outward from there, increasing the hurricane's upward motion. However, some of the air sinks inward towards the **EYE**, resulting in a cloud-free area.

Because hurricanes are often steered by weak and/or erratic winds, it is difficult to predict which events will become full-blown major hurricanes. Better forecasting through improved technology and an ever-growing better understanding of **TROPICAL DEPRESSIONS** and **TROPICAL STORMS** are resulting in better and faster hurricanes warnings being sent out to the public. However, hurricane-related fatalities continue to rise due to increased construction of homes, businesses and resorts near the shorelines of areas known to be struck by hurricanes.

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As with earthquakes, there is a measuring standard for hurricanes. It is the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale, and events are classified in five categories:

CATEGORY 1—MINIMAL
Hurricanes with a wind velocity of 74-95 miles per hour, with damage primarily limited to shrubbery, trees, foliage and unanchored mobile homes. (Hurricane Irene, 1999)

CATEGORY 2—MODERATE
Hurricanes with a wind velocity of 96-110 miles per hour, with some trees blown down, major damage to exposed mobile homes, and some damage to roofs, windows and doors. (Hurricane Floyd, 1999)

CATEGORY 3—EXTENSIVE
Hurricanes with a wind velocity of 111-130 miles per hour, with large tress blown down, some mobile homes destroyed, and some structural damage to roofs and small buildings. (Hurricane Alicia, 1983)

CATEGORY 4—EXTREME
Hurricanes with a wind velocity of 131-155 miles per hour, with all trees blown down, complete destruction of all mobile homes, extreme damage to all roofs, windows and doors, and the complete failure of roofs on small residences and buildings. (Hurricane Andrew, 1995)

CATEGORY 5—CATASTROPHIC
Hurricanes with a wind velocity of 156-plus miles per hour, with the complete failure of roofs of many residences and industrial buildings, and extensive damage to all windows and doors, with some totally collapsed buildings. (Hurricane Katrina, 2005)

As a side note, the word "hurricane" comes from two ancient civilizations; the Mayans, who called their storm deity "hunraken" and the Taino people of the Caribbean who called an evil deity of theirs "huracan".

Today's hurricanes are named by the National Weather Service.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HURRICANE:

Please be aware that during each hurricane season, there are three levels of warnings to be concerned about, and please realize that you and your family should know what each one means.

1.) HURRICANE LOCAL STATEMENT

This is a public news release prepared by local National Weather Service offices in or near a threatened area. It gives specific details for its county or parish, and warns of weather conditions, evacuation decisions made by local officials, and other necessary precautions to protect life and property.

2.) HURRICANE WATCH

This is an announcement of specific coastal areas where a hurricane condition poses a possible threat within the next 36 hours.

During a **HURRICANE WATCH**, you should be listening to your local radio or TV station for continuing storm updates, while preparing to cover all of the windows of your home and business, either with hurricane shutters, or precut half-inch outdoor plywood boards for each window of your home and/or business. Install anchors for the plywood and pre-drill holes in the plywood so you can put them up easier. Do not attempt to use tape; even duct tape, to cover your windows in lieu of hurricane shutters or plywood because tape will not hold your windows together during a hurricane.

Once the windows are covered, bring in all outdoor furniture, plants, dog houses, ornaments, anything outside of your home which will blow away during a hurricane. We do not leave unwanted stuff outside because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER".** Purposely leaving material outside is not very nice, certainly not neighborly, and will only create more debris. When you really think about it, these things will be flying shrapnel during a storm, so it's definitely not safe. Also, check all manufactured home tie-downs.

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You can also make your trees more wind-resistant by removing all dead or decaying branches, as well as some strategically-placed healthy branches. This will allow the winds to blow more freely through the tree, possibly preventing it from being blown down or away.

Finally, use this time to fill your gas tank, check your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, and replace or replenish any items as needed. Be especially aware of bottled water, canned food, batteries, medications, especially prescription drugs, and First Aid supplies you may need. Again, if you or your Neighborhood Watch group has never taken a Basic First Aid class or a CPR course, please have some pamphlets on hand so you will know how to treat some injuries, while at the same time, know when you will definitely need professional help. Review these materials before emergency strikes and confusion and panic have a chance to set in, and possibly risk a life, especially one that is dear to you.

3.) HURRICANE WARNING

This is a warning that sustained winds of 64 knots or 74 miles per hours associated with a hurricane are **expected** in a specific coastal area in 24 hours or less. A **HURRICANE WARNING** can remain in effect when dangerously highwater and exceptionally high waves continue, even though winds may be less than hurricane force.

During a **HURRICANE WARNING**, you should be listening to your local radio or TV station for continuing storm updates and evacuation orders, while completing any previously discussed preparations you have been unable to do thus far. But if local authorities tell you and your family to leave, leave immediately. Remember to help any elderly or disabled people whom you agreed to help, as they are relying on you. Again, if you now find yourself unable to help them, finding your replacement who will aid these folks is your responsibility. Also, remember your pets, and that long before now, you have made the proper preparations concerning them. As another reminder, Red Cross shelters will only accept Seeing Eye Dogs, and no other pets, even during a hurricane.

WHAT TO DO DURING A HURRICANE:

If you and your family are not advised to evacuate, get indoors as soon as possible, and stay away from windows, mirrors and other items like tall bookcases, china cabinets and other tall furniture which can potentially fall and hurt you. Although you might have never felt that you needed to prepare for an earthquake, it is nonetheless wise to attach these tall and heavy pieces of furniture to wall studs with screws so that they are not a worry.

There ought to be a small, windowless room in your house, like a bathroom, or even a large closet where you and your family can wait out the storm. Think of it as a "safe room". It should also be as close to the center of your home as possible. Some people think to use basements or cellars, but storm water can quickly flood these areas unless these rooms have been professionally storm-proofed. Stay in the small room and closet with your battery-powered radio, TV or NOAA radio in hand for instructions.

Remember the **EYE** of the hurricane is calm, but think of it as an intermission, as the other **EYEWALL** is on its way. Also, severe hurricanes will sometimes also spin off a tornado or two, and the tornadoes will sometimes occur not only during a hurricane, but after one as well. This is why you must wait to hear clear instructions from the proper authorities to know exactly when you can leave the "safe room".

If you have been asked to evacuate, and/or are traveling in your vehicle during a hurricane, and come across a washed-out road or bridge, do not attempt to cross it, even if you have an all-terrain vehicle, SUV, or some other 4-wheel drive vehicle. Remember what we have discussed about Floods. Chances are great that you will get stuck, or even worse, swept away in the torrent

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of water. Turn around and go another way as quickly as possible. If you become stuck, get out of the car immediately, and leave it; making your way to higher ground as best you can, as fast as you can.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A HURRICANE:

Keep listening to the radio for further reports, even if you have been evacuated, and then told it was now safe for you to return to your home or business. If your home is still standing, and even looks inhabitable, congratulations, but please look closer.

When you return to your home or office, do not enter it if it is partially underwater, or if you can see that water is still inside your house. Even if you only see a few inches of water on the floor, understand that water seeps into cracks, and can even undermine the foundation of your home. Foundation damage causes buildings to sink, floors to buckle, and walls to crack and collapse. If you are unsure, wait until you can get a city inspector to look at your property. You can also opt to hire a private, licensed professional inspector.

Besides water damage to your foundation, other potential hazards include electrical system damage, water and sewer line damage, and gas line damage. If you suspect any of these problems, it is best not to stay at your home. Local authorities may not even let you, if you were so inclined to "rough it" for awhile. This is when you would call upon your out-of-town contact person so that you and your family can stay with him or her until you can begin to think about returning home.

If you find your home is inhabitable, there are still some things to consider. First, open all the doors and unseal and open the windows, as the wind will help your home dry out faster. Shovel any mud out of your house while it is still wet, as it will be easier to do this way, and it also allows floors and walls to dry out quicker. As you work, be careful of creatures which the flood waters may have brought into your home. Have a long stick to poke them with which will ease them back outside. Do not pick up any creature with your hands, as they may be poisonous, or may carry dangerous germs which may cause illness.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator, you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generators should never be run inside your house or garage, and always operated outdoors. Only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. **NEVER** connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Throw out any food that has touched flood waters. Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets. **DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH** from your local gas, water and electricity providers. If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied, and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

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LANDSLIDES AND MUDSLIDES

Landslides, also known as mudslides and debris flow, occur in all 50 states and U.S. territories. They can be caused by fires, storms or earthquakes, and can occur very quickly, with little advance notice. It is estimated that each year in the U.S., landslides cause between 25 and 50 deaths, and up to $2 billion in damages.

When mountains and hillsides are oversaturated by rain, go through several periods of freezing and thawing, naturally erode, an earthquake or a volcanic eruption occurs, or a wildfire strikes, the force of gravity overcomes the resistance of the Earth to create a landslide. While natural causes are impossible to overcome, the chief cause of many manmade landslides and mudslides can be controlled--over construction in high risk areas.

But there is some true unpredictability to landslides and mudslides. Some can move slowly and cause gradual damage, while others can move so rapidly that people are killed by the unexpected onslaught. Many are thought to be caused by heavy rainfall or rapid snow melt, and worsen the effects of the flooding that typically accompanies the slides. Yet other landslides and mudslides are caused where there has not been enough rain in areas burned by wildfire, brush or forest fires.

The typical mudslide occurs after a period of intense rain or rapid snow melt. Usually beginning on steep hillsides as a shallow landslide, it will liquefy and accelerate to speeds of 10 to 35 miles per hour or even faster. The mudslide will range from watery mud to thick and rocky mud, and is quite capable of carrying large items such as boulders, trees and cars.

If there are other mudslides occurring simultaneously, they can join together to combine in channels, multiplying their destructive power. They can continue flowing down hills and channels, growing in volume with the addition of water, sand, mud, boulders, trees, cars and other items until reaching level ground. Once there, the debris spreads over a wide area, sometimes forming into thick deposits that can really damage developed areas.

Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and wildfires will all cause landslides and mudslides. The first way to be prepared for a possible landslide or mudslide is to determine if one has ever happened in your area before. Your local law enforcement agency will know the answer.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A LANDSLIDE OR MUDSLIDE:

The best way to plan for a mudslide is to stay informed about changes in and around your home or office which could signal that a landslide or mudslide is likely to happen. Knowing your surroundings will help you determine if you live in a high risk area. After discovering whether a landslide or mudslide has occurred near your home or office before, look around your area. The bases of steep slopes, the bases of drainage channels, and developed hillsides containing septic systems are generally prone to slides. Look for patterns of storm water drainage near your home or office, especially noting the places where runoff water converges, increasing flow over soil-covered slopes. Check hillsides around your home or office for any sign of land movement, such as small landslides, debris flow, or progressively tilting trees.

Changes in landscape and water drainage, or new cracks in foundations and sidewalks are good clues.

Always follow proper land-use procedures, like avoiding steep slopes or naturally eroding valleys, streams and rivers, intermittent-stream channels, and the mouths of mountain channels when building your home or office. It is best to consult a licensed, professional consulting company specializing in earth movement for opinions and advice on landslide and mudslide problems, and on corrective measures you can take when first constructing your home or office, or in retro-fitting.

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These companies will most likely be those which specialize in geotechnical engineering, structural engineering, or civil engineering. Local officials could possibly advise you as to the best kind of professional to contact in your area. Taking steps without professional consultation will probably worsen your situation; costing you more time and money in the long run.

Some appropriate preventative measures for your home or business include:

a.) Consider elevating your furnace, water heater, or electric panel higher off the ground if they are located in a lower level of your home or business.

b.) Think about installing flexible pipe fittings, which can better resist breakage during floods or mudslides; and "check valves" to prevent flood water and debris from backing up into the drains of your home or business.

c.) If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater, mud and debris from entering the building.

d.) Seal walls in basements with water-proofing compounds.

Prepare an evacuation plan for your home and business, which include alternate routes, should the roads you usually use be washed-out by the flood, or blocked by mud and debris. Try to have at least a half of tank of gas in your vehicle.

Discuss landslide and mudslide plans with everyone in your family or group, just as you would prior to any emergency. Everyone should know what to do in case all family members are not together. This lets everyone know how to respond, and helps reduce fear and anxiety during the actual crisis.

Another warning about having adequate insurance also applies to landslides and mudslides.

You must check with your insurance agent or insurance company to see if you have Landslide and Landslide/ Mudslide Coverage as part of your Flood Insurance policy. Chances are high that unless you have specifically asked for this coverage, and have been approved for it by your insurance company in writing, **YOU ARE NOT COVERED.**

If you live in a high risk area, and you can afford to buy this insurance, it is a must. As it is a part of your Flood Insurance package, and it normally takes 30 days for Flood Insurance to go into effect, you cannot wait until you hear about the possibility of an oncoming emergency before purchasing the policy. You can also check with your city or county government and see if they participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, and that landslide/mudslide protection is included in any policy you purchase. Again, there is a high probability that FEMA will not help you after a crisis if you could have afforded insurance and chose not to participate.

If local authorities tell you and your family or group to evacuate, leave immediately, bringing along your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**. Remember to help any elderly disabled people whom you agreed to help, as they are relying on you. If you now find yourself unable to help them, finding your replacement who will aid these folks is your responsibility. Also, remember your pets, and that long before now, you have made the proper preparations concerning them. As another reminder, Red Cross shelters will only accept Seeing Eye Dogs, and no other pets, under any circumstances.

If you are traveling in your vehicle during a landslide or mudslide, do not go around barricades, as they have been put up to protect you. Turn around, and find another route.

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WHAT TO DO DURING A LANDSLIDE OR MUDSLIDE:

Many who die during landslides and mudslides are people who are usually asleep. If you live in a high risk area, and there is an intense storm around you, it is foolhardy to go to sleep. It is surprising just how many people do this, year after year.

During an intense storm, you should be listening to the news, either on radio, TV or NOAA radio. Even short, but intense bursts of rain can be dangerous, especially after longer periods of heavy rainfall and damp weather. If you are at home, and have a second story, you should all wait out the emergency upstairs.

You or someone else in your family or group should be listening for unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris or sinkholes developing, such as trees cracking, or boulders knocking together. A trickle of flowing or falling mud or debris may precede larger landslides. Again, moving debris can flow quickly and sometimes without warning.

If you are near a stream or channel, be alert for any sudden increase or decrease in water flow, and for a change from clear to muddy water. Such changes may indicate landslide activity upstream, so be prepared to move quickly. Don't delay! Save yourself, not your belongings.

Driving during an intense storm is dangerous. You must be especially alert when driving. Embankments along roadsides are particularly susceptible to landslides. Watch the road for collapsed pavement, mud, fallen rocks, and other indications of possible landslides and mudslides.

If you come across a washed-out or debris-choked road or bridge, do not attempt to cross it, even if you have a SUV, or some other 4-wheel drive vehicle. Remember what we have discussed about Floods. Chances are great that you will get stuck, or even worse, possibly be hit by another landslide, which, if strong enough, will crush you and your family inside of your vehicle. If you do get stuck, get out of the car immediately, and leave it; making your way to safety as fast as you can.

If you see an oncoming landslide, and there is absolutely no time or any way to get out of the way, then, **as a last resort, curl up into a tight ball, and protect your head.** This position will provide the best protection for your body.

Of course, you will have to hope you're not buried or crushed by debris, your air supply is sufficient, and that you have not suffered injuries so severe that you find yourself unable to move. Moving away from where you've just miraculously personally survived a landslide is advisable as another one could be heading the very same way, any time now, and hit you as well. What are the odds of personally surviving one, let alone two landslides? That's why curling up into a ball is such a last resort; you must find some way, any way, to get out of the path of an oncoming landslide or mudslide.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A LANDSLIDE OR MUDSLIDE:

Continue to listen to the radio, TV or NOAA radio for the latest information, staying clear of slide areas. Additional slides may occur. Floods sometimes occur after a landslide or mudslide because they have been both caused by the same event.

When you have been advised by local authorities that it is safe to return to your home or office, carefully drive back along a route that has been recently reported as safe and clear to use. The landslide may have just wiped out the very route you used to evacuate, so don't assume you can just turn around.

While carefully heading back to home or office, try to notice the "lay of the land", so to speak. If you see downed power lines, report them to authorities.

AVOID ALL DOWNED POWER LINES—IT SHOULD ALWAYS BE ASSUMED THEY ARE 'LIVE' AND THEIR SHOCK WILL KILL YOU.

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Even more importantly, see who may need your help. Because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER"**, please look around as you head towards home for people who may be in need of help, First Aid or other assistance. Never assume that somebody else has seen the injured person or stranded motorist that you have. You have seen them, and that should be enough for you to help. Offer aid, or dial 9-1-1 from either your cell phone, or the nearest working telephone, pay or private.

Help your neighbors who may require special assistance, like the disabled, or the elderly. After an emergency, some larger families may find they need help caring for their children, or even infants. Offer your assistance, because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER"**.

When you return to your home or office, check the building foundation, chimney, and surrounding land for damage. If you are unsure, wait until you can get a city inspector to look your property over. You may even opt to hire a private, licensed professional inspector.

Besides damage to your foundation, other potential hazards include electrical system damage, water and sewer line damage, and gas line damage. If you suspect any of these problems, contact your local utility companies for assistance. At this point, it is probably not a good idea to stay at your home. Ask your out-of-town contact person if you and your family can stay with them until you can begin to sort things out at your own residence.

If your home has sustained damage, but not so much that it is uninhabitable, there are still some things to consider. First, open all the doors and windows, as the wind will help your home dry out faster. Shovel any mud or debris out of your house while it is still wet, as it will be easier to do this way, and it will also allow floors and walls to dry out quicker. As you work, be careful of creatures which the slide may have brought into your home. Have a long stick to poke them with which will ease them back outside. Do not pick up any creature with your hands, as they may be poisonous, or may carry dangerous germs which may cause illness.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator, you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, and for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generators should never be run inside your house or garage. Always operate it outdoors, and only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. **NEVER** connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Throw out any food that has touched mud or debris. Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets. **DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH** from your local gas, water and electricity providers. If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied, and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

As you rebuild, begin by replanting damaged ground as soon as possible. This will help prevent erosion caused by loss of ground cover, which is a result of flash floods. Seek the advice of a licensed, professional consulting company specializing in geotechnical matters for opinions and advice on landslide and mudslide hazards, and on corrective techniques to reduce your future risk, while, at the same time, not creating any hazards.

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THUNDERSTORMS AND LIGHTNING

The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts 30 minutes. A severe thunderstorm produces hail which is at least three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and has winds of at least 58 miles per hour.

A thunderstorm needs moisture to form clouds and rain; unstable, warm air that rises rapidly; and cold or warm fronts, sea breezes, mountains or the sun's heat to provide the necessary lifting of air to create the thunderstorm.

Thunderstorms have three stages:

a.) DEVELOPING STAGE: Marked by a towering cumulus cloud, this stage lasts about 10 minutes, has little, if any rain, and features occasional lightning.

b.) MATURE STAGE: Marked by a black or dark green appearance, this stage lasts from between 10 and 20 minutes, but can last much longer. It features heavy rains, strong winds, frequent lightning, hail and possible tornadoes.

c.) DISSIPATING STAGE: Lasting about 10 minutes, with rainfall decreasing in intensity, this stage can still produce strong bursts of wind and dangerous lightning.

All thunderstorms produce lightning, and all lightning strikes have the potential for danger. Lightning is the most dangerous and frequently encountered weather hazard that most people experience each year. About 100 Americans are killed by lightning each year, and about 500 more are injured. It is second only to floods as the most frequent weather-related killer.

All thunderstorms also produce the potential for even more dangerous emergency events like tornadoes, strong winds, hail, and wildfires. Thunderstorms also produce **FLASH FLOODS**. Lightning is second only to **FLASH FLOODS** as the most frequent weather-related killer.

Lightning's risk to individuals and property is increased because it is so unpredictable. It often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur up to 10 miles away from any rainfall. This is because lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles.

Lightning results from the buildup and discharge of electrical energy between positively and negatively charged areas. Air shifting within a thunderstorm separates these charges, and water and ice particles also affect charge distribution.

A lightning strike begins as an invisible channel of electrically charged air moving from the cloud towards the ground. When the channel approaches an object on the ground, a powerful surge of electricity rises from the ground moves upward to the clouds and produces the visible lightning strike. The air near a lightning strike is heated to 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit. This is hotter than the surface of the Sun! The rapid heating and cooling of the air near a lightning channel causes a shock wave which results in thunder.

Each year, lightning strikes the Earth 20 million times. The energy from one strike could light a 100-watt bulb for more than 3 months.

Many deaths from lightning occur ahead of the storm because people try to wait to the last minute before seeking shelter. They are caught outdoors during the summer in the afternoon and evening. On average 20 percent of strike victims die; 70 percent suffer long-term injuries and/or effects.

You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder. Hearing thunder means that that lightning is close enough that it could strike your location at any moment. Once you hear thunder, you need to get to safety.

THE 30/30 LIGHTNING SAFETY RULE: Get indoors if, after first seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

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If you need to figure out how close the thunderstorm is to you, simply count the number of seconds between a flash of lightning and the next thunderclap; then divide by 5. For example, if you count 30 seconds between the lightning and thunder, and divide 30 by 5, your answer is six. The thunderstorm is 6 miles away from your location.

There is a lot of fact and fiction about lightning, and we will now examine some of them.

1. If it's not raining, then there is no danger from lightning.

The truth is that lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall. This is especially true in the western United States where thunderstorms sometimes produce very little rain.

2. The rubber soles of shoes or rubber tires on a car will protect you from being struck by lightning.

The truth is that rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. The steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal. Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outdoors during a thunderstorm.

3. People struck by lightning carry an electrical charge and should not be touched.

The truth is that lightning-strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be attended to immediately (see below).

4. HEAT LIGHTNING occurs after very hot summer days and poses no threat.

The truth is that HEAT LIGHTNING is a term used to describe lightning from a thunderstorm too far away for thunder to be heard. Remember, lightning may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.

Even when the sky looks blue and clear, be cautious. Once you hear thunder, take cover inside a building or, if there's no building around at all, inside a vehicle. Again, the car needs a hard-top, so this means no convertibles, or any kind of vehicle, like some small all-terrain vehicles or SUVs, which have no tops. Once inside the car, keep the windows closed and avoid touching any metal such as a door handle or the car keys.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THUNDERSTORMS & LIGHTNING:

Begin by regularly checking on your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** to be sure you will have everything that might need, especially if the thunderstorm spins off into a hurricane or tornado.

This includes having ample supplies of water, food, batteries, your battery-powered radio, TV, NOAA radio, your Basic First Aid Kit, medications, including prescription medications, and applicable clothing.

In addition, it is a good idea to remove any dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.

As you would during a **HURRICANE WATCH**, secure outdoor objects which could blow away or cause damage, and shutter your windows, and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close the windows and draw the blinds. If windows should break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades will prevent glass from shattering into your home.

Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are imminent. This is the best way to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.

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WHAT TO DO DURING THUNDERSTORMS & LIGHTNING:

Move to a sturdy building or hard-top car. **DON'T** take shelter in small sheds, under isolated trees, or in a convertible automobile.

Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. This is why you are strongly urged to not make telephone calls, or use any appliances during a thunderstorm. Even if you want to risk your safety, you should be advised that power surges from lightning can overload your appliances, especially air conditioners, either ruining them completely, or creating enormous repair bills. You should unplug all household appliances until the storm passes.

Plumbing fixtures can also conduct electricity; so avoid taking a bath or shower, or running sink water for any other purpose.

If you are in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees.

If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately.

If you are walking outdoors, and there are no vehicles or buildings in which to find shelter, go to a low-lying open place away from trees, poles, or metal objects. Just be certain that the place you pick is not subject to flooding.

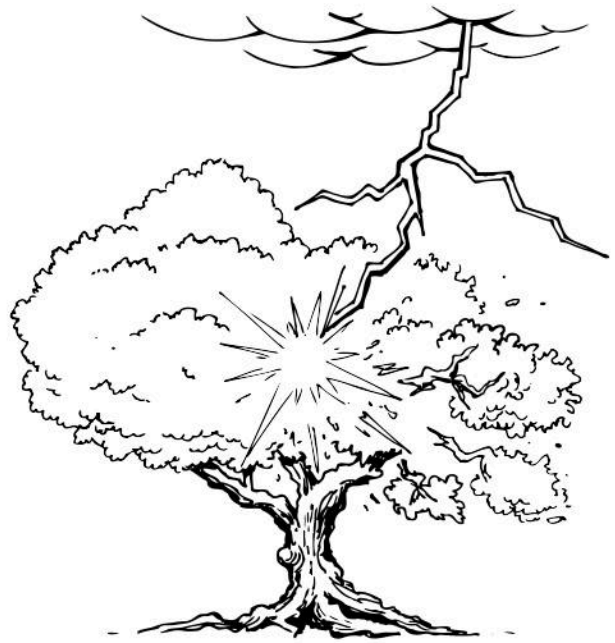
Make yourself the smallest target possible by squatting low to the ground, and placing your hands on your knees with your head between them. Lying flat on the ground will only make you a larger target for lightning.

If someone gets struck by lightning, call for help. Dial 9-1-1, or get someone to do it for you. As previously explained, the injured person has received an electrical shock, but carries no electrical charge, and can be handled safely.

If the victim is not breathing, attempt to open his or her airway, and begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. If the victim's heart has stopped, a person trained in CPR should administer it.

If the person has a pulse and is breathing, look and care for other injuries.

The victim may be burned; both where the lightning first struck, and where the electricity left his or her body. Check for burns in both places. Being struck by lightning can cause nervous system damage, broken bones, and loss of hearing or eyesight.



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WHAT TO DO AFTER THUNDERSTORMS & LIGHTNING:

Keep listening to the radio, TV or NOAA for further information. Remember, thunderstorms produce tornadoes, strong winds, hail, flash floods and wildfires.

If you have been trapped outdoors or taking shelter in a vehicle, get safely inside a building, and learn if a more serious threat, like a hurricane or tornado is on its way. If so, get to the nearest Red Cross shelter, or, if time permits, and only if time permits, try to get home. Understand that once you do get home, you may be asked to evacuate. Weight your options carefully.

If you do travel somewhere, please drive very cautiously, staying away from storm—damaged areas, as EMTs and utility crews may be trying to help people, and you would be getting in their way.

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TORNADOES

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air, extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until they begin to pick up dust and debris from the ground, or a cloud forms within the funnel. The average tornado moves from southwest to northeast, but tornadoes have been known to move in any direction. They average 30 miles per hour, but have been known to appear almost stationary to about 70 miles per hour, yet they have been measured up to 250 miles per hour. Tornadoes nearly always start as a funnel cloud, and may be accompanied by a loud roaring noise. Tornadoes may accompany tropical storms and hurricanes as they move onto land.

Before thunderstorms develop, a change in wind direction and an increase in wind speed, with increasing height, create an invisible, horizontal spinning effect in the lower atmosphere. Rising air within the thunderstorm updraft tilts the rotating air from horizontal to vertical. An area of rotation, 2 to 6 miles wide, now extends through much of the storm. Most tornadoes form within this area of strong rotation.

Tornadoes can occur at any time during the year, and have appeared in all 50 states, but usually occur east of the Rocky Mountains between the hours of 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. during the spring and summer. In the southern states, the peak season for tornadoes is March through May. In northern states, the peak season is late spring through summer.

WATERSPOUTS are tornadoes which form over warm water. They are common along the southeast U.S. coast, especially off the Florida Keys, but can happen over any lake, bay, sea or ocean worldwide. While weaker than most Great Plains tornadoes, they are strong enough to overturn small boats, damage ships, and create major damage and kill people if they move onshore and cause damage to coastal areas. Once hitting land, waterspouts become classified as tornadoes.

A TORNADO FAMILY is a series of tornadoes produced by a single strong thunderstorm system, resulting in damage path segments along the same general line.

Although there are elaborate methods and differing scales for measuring tornadoes, there is a simple system which we will explain here:

1.) WEAK TORNADOES: 88 percent of all tornadoes are classified as "weak". They produce winds of less then 110 miles per hour, last from 1 to 10 minutes, and result in about 5 percent of deaths attributable to tornadoes.

2.) STRONG TORNADOES: 11 percent of all tornadoes are classified as "strong". They produce winds of between 110 to 205 miles per hour, can last 20 minutes or more, and result in about 25 percent of deaths attributable to tornadoes.

3.) VIOLENT TORNADOES: 1 percent of all tornadoes are classified as "violent". They produce winds of 205 miles or more per hour, can last and hour or longer, and result in about 70 percent of deaths attributable to tornadoes.

The National Weather Service has strategically placed Doppler radar stations across the United States that can detect air movement either toward or away from a radar outpost. Early detection of increasing rotation aloft within a thunderstorm can allow life-saving warnings to be issued before a tornado forms.

There is a lot of fact and fiction about tornadoes, and tornado stories, both true and false, have been told since Americans first attempted to settle the Midwestern portion of the United States. Of course, the most popular tornado story of all is easily L. Frank Baum's "The Wizard of Oz".

There are some popular urban (or rural) myths out there about tornadoes. Here are some good ones that sure sound real:

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1. Areas near lakes, rivers and mountains are safe from tornadoes.

The truth is that NO place is safe. A tornado near Yellowstone National Park left a path of destruction up and down a 10,000 foot mountain.

2. Low pressure within a tornado causes buildings to "explode" as the tornado passes overhead.

The truth is that violent winds and debris slamming into buildings causes most structural damage and total collapses.

3. Windows should be opened before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

The truth is that if you are indoors just before a tornado, your windows should be the last thing on your mind as you rush to seek immediate safe shelter in a basement, cellar, closet, or, if there is no place else, the center of your home is safest.



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4. If you are driving and a tornado is sighted, you should turn and drive at right angles to the storm.

The truth is you should immediately seek the best available shelter out and away from your vehicle. Many people are killed choosing to remain inside their vehicle during a tornado.

5. People caught in the open should seek shelter under highway overpasses.

The truth is that taking shelter in a reinforced building is always safer. Overpasses, ditches and culverts will provide limited protection in a pinch, but it is better to be inside a reinforced building.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A TORNADO:

Please be aware that in the possible event of a tornado, there are four levels of warnings to be concerned about, and please realize that you and your family should know what each one means.

Although the National Weather Service is responsible for officially tracking all of the weather within the United States, the jurisdiction for issuing any Tornado Warnings falls to the Storm Prediction Center, located in Norman, OK.

1.) PRELIMINARY TORNADO WATCH: Prior to issuing a tornado watch, the Storm Prediction Center will usually contact the affected local National Weather Service office and, in collaboration, will first discuss the current weather situation, and then decide if any sort of tornado warning is warranted. Ultimately, the Storm Prediction Center has the call, and will issue a preliminary tornado watch while the affected National Weather Service office will then adjust the watch, adding or subtracting counties or parishes, and then issue it to the public.

2.) WATCH DEFINING STATEMENT: The National Weather Service office affected by the watch will let the public know which counties and parishes are included by way of a **WATCH DEFINING STATEMENT.** During this time, the National Weather Service office will keep the public informed on what is happening in the watch area and also if and when the watch has expired or been cancelled.

3.) TORNADO WATCH: The National Weather Service office affected by the watch will upgrade the watch to an official **TORNADO**

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WATCH when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and around and close to the affected area. The size and scope (which counties & parishes are included) of the watch will vary, depending on weather conditions. Watches are usually valid for a period of 4 to 8 hours, and are normally issued well in advance of the actual occurrence of severe weather.

During a **TORNADO WATCH**, you should be listening to your local radio or TV station for continuing storm updates. You need to really start readying yourself and your family for a possible tornado by double checking your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT,** supplies, including sufficient food and water for you, your family and pets, in case the need should arise. Even though tornados do not last long, their impact certainly can. Also, take this time to review tornado safety rules and be prepared to move to a safe place if threatening weather actually approaches. Turn off your gas main and all appliances; and unplug all of your appliances if there is time.

This "safe place" is a location inside your home where all family members could gather if a tornado heads your way. It could be a basement or cellar, or if your house doesn't have one of those, a center hallway, windowless bathroom, or closet on the lowest floor. It should be free of, or now made free of, any glass or objects that could fly around and hit somebody. Always keep this "safe room" uncluttered for easy access and maneuvering in the event of an actual emergency.

If you are in an office building, and cannot quickly find a "safe room", pick a place in a hallway near or in the center of the building. We have already discussed what to do if you are outside or driving in your vehicle. As a reminder, you should quickly get inside a basement or the inside center hallway of a nearby building; and if all else fails, lie flat in a low-lying ditch, culvert, or under a highway overpass, and once again, these should not be your first choices. Always remember to get out of your vehicle, as it has proven to be one of the very worst places to be in a tornado.

4.) TORNADO WARNING: A Tornado Warning is issued by the affected National Weather Service office when a tornado is indicated by radar or sighted by spotters. Thereafter, people in the affected area should seek safe shelter immediately. **A TORNADO WARNING can be issued without a TORNADO WATCH first being issued.**

A **TORNADO WARNING** is usually in effect for about 30 minutes. It will include where the tornado was located and which towns will be in its path.

After a tornado warning has been issued, the affected National Weather Service Office will follow it up periodically with **SEVERE WEATHER STATEMENTS.** These messages will contain updated information on the tornado and the affected National Weather Service office will also let the public know when the **TORNADO WARNING** has expired or has been cancelled.

If the tornado is expected to affect the shore or coastal waters, it will be issued as a combined **TORNADO WARNING and SPECIAL MARINE WARNING.**

If the thunderstorm which is causing the tornado is also producing torrential rains, this warning may also be issued as a combined **TORNADO WARNING and FLASH FLOOD WARNING.**

It is now time for you and your family, and your pets, to go to the "safe place" inside your home. You should have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** and other supplies, and be listening to your battery-operated radio or watching your battery-operated TV for current information. You may even be able to hear the approaching tornado, as many people describe it sounding like an oncoming train.

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WHAT TO DO AFTER A TORNADO:

When the tornado has passed, and information you heard or seen on the radio or TV has confirmed this, you may attempt to leave the "safe place" to inspect your property. Remember to have on your sturdy shoes, as the chance is great for there to be debris about, even if your home seems relatively untouched. Just be careful, look at the area around you, and be sure it is safe for you and your family to move around. Once it is safe, check on your family, inspect your home, and if you smell gas, immediately turn off the gas main, open any windows, and get everybody outdoors.

If your home has been destroyed, hopefully you will be able to stay with out-of-town contact person. If not, you and your family, but not your pets, can go to the local Red Cross shelter. If you are forced to leave your premises, remember to take all of your important documents with you.

If you don't smell gas, and your home is safe to occupy, follow the basic rules of looking for and extinguishing any small fires, unplugging unnecessary appliances, turning off all unnecessary lights, and try to eliminate any other potential hazards. Clean up any broken glass, and cover any broken windows and mirrors with old blankets, or even with old newspaper and tape.

If your home has sustained damage, but not so much that it is uninhabitable, there are still some things to consider. First, wearing a long-sleeved shirt or blouse, and also wearing work gloves, try to clean up all broken glass and any other debris which can cut you or somebody else. Anybody helping you should also be wearing work gloves and long-sleeved shirts or blouses. Dispose of any food which appears to have been damaged by the tornado as it is now probably contaminated.

As you work, be careful of creatures which the tornado may have blown into your home. Have a long stick to poke them with which will ease them back outside. Do not pick up any creature with your hands, as they may be poisonous, or may carry dangerous germs which may cause illness.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generally speaking, generators should never be run inside your house or garage, always operate it outdoors. Only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. NEVER connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets. **DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH** from your local gas, water and electricity providers. If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied, and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

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TSUNAMIS:

A tsunami is an ocean wave produced by an underwater earthquake, landslide or volcanic eruption. These waves may reach enormous size and have enough energy to travel across an entire ocean. Traveling anywhere from 450 to 600 miles per hours on the open sea, and reaching anywhere from 7-8 feet to well over 10-20 feet, tsunamis, sometimes incorrectly called "tidal waves", are in fact, several waves of water which can have devastating and deadly impact if they reach land.

Since 1800, 24 tsunamis have affected the United States and its territories, and since 1946, close to 400 people have died as a result of tsunamis. These deaths occurred in Alaska, Hawaii, California, Oregon and in the State of Washington. Tsunamis can occur in any season, in any weather, at any time, day or night.

Once ashore, some tsunamis still have the energy to travel upstream in flood control channels, rivers, streams, and creeks, enabling these same waves to cause damage further inland.

The word "tsunami" is Japanese for "harbor wave". It is named after the kind of destructive waves which have destroyed low-lying Japanese communities throughout the years. While most recorded tsunamis have been 10-20 feet, some have been known to reach 100 feet. On the open sea, tsunamis are not seen or felt by passing ships because their wavelength is hundreds of miles long, and thus, their height at this time is only a few feet; meaning that they can't be spotted by aircraft.

Since most tsunamis are caused by earthquakes in the ocean floor, which are quickly measurable, this is the first indication of the possibility of a tsunami. A major earthquake can generate a tsunami that reaches the beach in only minutes, too fast to issue any warning. But those who are always most at risk live anywhere from several feet below sea level up to 25 feet above sea level, and live in Alaska, Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington State or the Canadian province of British Columbia.

Once a tsunami is created, it's much like throwing a stone in a pond. The ripple effect can last anywhere from between 5 to 90 minutes. The first wave which reaches shore may not end up being the largest or even troublesome at all. Some waves have affected towns to the north or south of you, but not necessarily where you are. A number of factors and variables determine whether the waves will cause little or no damage, or leave debris stacks of hundreds of feet. Within the initial few hours following the undersea earthquake, the danger is very real.

Telephone books in many areas have detailed maps which advise you of the best escape routes. Always check your local telephone directory for similar aids.

There are two United States government offices which track tsunamis: The West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Center (for California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska and British Columbia) and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (for Hawaii, U.S. territories in the Pacific and any international service it may provide). These two centers coordinate all information, and issue applicable warnings.

Only an earthquake, landslide or volcanic eruption, which causes measurable movement on the ocean floor, can create a tsunami. They can begin at a faraway, or at a local source. Although damaging tsunamis which reach U.S. coastlines are rare, they have happened, and will occur again. If you are aware of their possibility after an earthquake, and listen for warning signs, you can be ready.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A TSUNAMI:

The first and best defense is staying current with the news. If there has been a large earthquake near any ocean that lasted over 20 seconds, a tsunami may be on its way.

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The two government agencies previously discussed have established four levels of notification:

1.) TSUNAMI INFORMATION BULLETIN: Acknowledging that an earthquake or other event has caused ocean floor movement, but that a tsunami is not expected.

2.) TSUNAMI ADVISORY BULLETIN: Acknowledging that an earthquake or other event has caused ocean floor movement, and that a tsunami is possible. After the first Advisory, updates will be issued each hour, until the threat passes.

3.) TSUNAMI WATCH BULLETIN: A tsunami may or may not have been created, but if one has been generated, it is at least two hours away. At this point, local officials should begin preparing for possible evacuations, if they haven't already done so; and shoreline homes and businesses should respect the threat by closing business for the day, and by preparing sandbags, and boarding up windows and doors.

4.) TSUNAMI WARNING BULLETIN: A tsunami may be on its way, and people in the warned areas are strongly advised to evacuate.

Again, if there has been a major earthquake near any ocean that lasted over 20 seconds, AND if there is a noticeable rapid rise or fall in the waters just off the shoreline, a tsunami is definitely coming.

If you live or work near the coastline in an area that is prone to tsunamis, or even high tides, and water regularly gets into your home or office, it is probably time you considered hiring a professional engineer to inspect your property. The engineer may be able to advise you to build walls or plant specific kinds of plants which may be able to divert incoming waters. Do not assume that you can hire anybody to build a wall between your home and office and the ocean. This will not only NOT guarantee success, it could end up making matters worse. Allow a professional engineer to assess the situation for you. You may even decide it might be best to move to higher ground. Or, you may decide that the lifestyle you so much enjoy near the ocean's roar is worth the price to you and your family or co-workers.

WHAT TO DO DURING A TSUNAMI:

If you are near the ocean when a strong earthquake strikes, remember the **C-D-H** rules of take **Cover, Duck** under something, and **Hold** on. If you are outside, remember to try to be in an open space away from buildings, trees and power lines. When the shaking stops, if it has been a strong earthquake, gather up your family and friends and get to higher ground as quickly as possible. Again, some tsunamis will occur so fast that there won't be time for any warning.

If you have not yet experienced an **AFTERSHOCK** from the stronger main earthquake, and local authorities and the news media have not mentioned a credible tsunami alert of any kind, and you're nearby your home or office, there is probably enough time for you to go to one of them if you need a bit of time to regroup. This means you should take the time to be sure that you have remembered your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, and to confirm that everyone in your family is accounted for, knows your family's plans, including his or her designated reunion place, contact numbers, etc.

If you have agreed to help an elderly or disabled person to look after in case of an emergency, be certain you remember your responsibility to that person. If you find you are unable to assist that person yourself, it is up to you to find your replacement. You are being relied upon by your neighbors. Please do not let them down. Finally, remember your pets and the plans for them that you had previously made. Again, keep in mind that no Red Cross shelter will take your pets, only Seeing Eye Dogs.

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If your home or business is at least 10 feet above sea level, chances are very good that there won't be a lot of property damage. Before leaving your home or business, bring in any items you keep outside, or they could be washed away. Be sure you have turned off the gas main, unplugged your appliances, closed and boarded up your windows and placed sandbags by the doors. If there's time, it's a good idea to place them around the perimeter of your home. Be sure you have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, including the battery-operated radio, TV, or NOAA radio with you at all times. It's now time to evacuate.

If you are in charge of small children, elderly or disabled people, please realize that you will probably need extra time to evacuate. This means, get to safer ground as quickly as possible.

You may find that these added responsibilities do not leave you enough time to safeguard your property as much as you might like, or are being advised to do. If this happens to you, be mature and understand that your family and friends are priceless, especially compared to your home and office, and get out immediately. If there is a responsible adult you trust to do some things for you which you cannot, and their help will still leave that person enough time to evacuate, ask for help. If that person refuses because he is unsure he will actually have enough time to help you and to evacuate, let it go. Don't argue. Everybody's safety is vastly more important than any material items, even a house or business.

Know the exact evacuation routes before leaving. Imagine being stuck in traffic when the oncoming wave hits. This is a Southern Californian's nightmare, to be sure.

Tsunamis are the Rodney Dangerfield of natural disasters, as they "get no respect". But as we saw in Indonesia on December 26, 2004, they are no laughing matter. As of September 1, 2006, 186,983 people are confirmed dead, and 42,883 are still missing (Total: 229,866) following the undersea earthquake and subsequent tsunami near Sumatra, Indonesia.

Your community may have little or no respect for even the possibility of a tsunami, so this is where Neighborhood Watch can really make a difference. Because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER,"** Neighborhood Watch can meet with local law enforcement and town officials to make sure there are disaster plans, evacuation routes, and thoughtful building construction near low-lying coastlines in the 6 states and several territories where tsunamis are real possibilities.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A TSUNAMI:

When you have been advised by local authorities that it is safe to return to your home or office, carefully drive back along a route that has been recently reported as safe and clear to use. The tsunami may have just wiped out the very route you used to evacuate, so don't assume you can just turn around.

While carefully heading back to home or office, try to notice what has been damaged, but, even more importantly, who may need your help. Because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER",** please look around as you head towards home for people who may be in need of help, First Aid or other assistance. Never assume that somebody else has seen an injured person, or even a stranded motorist, for that matter. You have seen them, and that should be enough for you to dial 9-1-1 from either your cell phone, or the nearest working telephone, pay or private.

When you return to your home or office, do not enter it if it is partially underwater, or if you can see that water is still inside your house. Even if you only see a few inches of water on the floor, understand that water can seep into cracks, and in some cases, even undermine the foundation of your home.

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This causes buildings to sink, floors to buckle, and the walls to crack, or even collapse. If you are unsure, get an inspector from the city or town you live in to take a look. Or, you may hire a private inspector yourself, just to be safe.

Besides water damage to your foundation, other potential hazards include electrical system damage, water and sewer line damage, and gas line damage. If you suspect any of these problems, it is best not to stay at your home, and local authorities may not even let you, if you were so inclined to "rough it" for awhile. Hopefully, you can call upon your out-of-town contact person for temporary shelter, or perhaps you have another friend or relative close by who will let you and your family stay with them until you can begin to sort things out at your ownresidence. Again, the Red Cross also has shelters available during emergencies, but will not accept pets, only Seeing Eye Dogs.

If your home has sustained damage, but not so much that it is uninhabitable, there are still some things to consider. First, open all the doors and unseal and open the windows, as the wind will help your home dry out faster. Shovel any mud out of your house while it is still wet, as it will be easier to do this way, and will also allow floors and walls to dry out quicker. As you work, be careful of creatures which the flood waters may have brought into your home, especially if you were unable to lay sandbags along the entire perimeter of your house. Even if you have done this, it is still possible that some "friends" came by to stay while you were away. Have a long stick to poke them with which will ease them back outside. Do not pick up any creature with your hands, especially snakes or jellyfish, as they may be poisonous, or may carry dangerous germs which may cause illness.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator, you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generally speaking, generators should never be run inside your house or garage, always operate it outdoors. Only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. NEVER connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Throw out any food that has touched flood waters. Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets. **DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH** from your local gas, water and electricity providers. If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied, and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

ALWAYS CHECK YOUR LOCAL PHONE BOOK FOR EMERGENCY EVACUATION ROUTES, ESPECIALLY WHEN ARRIVING AT AN UNFAMILIAR AREA.

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VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

Volcanoes in the United States which may one day become active exist mainly in Hawaii, Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. When pressure builds up within a volcano's molten rock, it can potentially erupt. When it does, this will send forth lava flows, poisonous gases and flying rock and ash that can sometimes travel hundred of miles downwind.

Every year, about 60 volcanoes erupt somewhere in the world. Thankfully, much of the activity is pretty weak. But, after an eruption, ash flows can occur on all sides of a volcano, and dangerous mudslides and floods can occur in valleys leading away from active volcanoes.

As with earthquakes and hurricanes, there is a measuring standard for volcanic eruptions. It is the Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI), and is based on a number of factors that can be observed during an eruption. Eruptions are classified in nine categories:

1.) NON-EXPLOSIVE (VEI=0): The plume height of this kind of eruption is less than 100 meters. It emits about 3,000 cubic meters of lava on a daily basis. This type of volcano is Hawaiian, and a good example is Kilauea, Hawaii.

2.) GENTLE (VEI=1): The plume height of this kind of eruption is varies from 100 meters to 1,000 meters. It emits about 30,000 cubic meters of lava on a daily basis. This type of volcano is Hawaiian/Strombolian, and a good example is Stromboli, Italy.

3.) EXPLOSIVE (VEI=2): The plume height of this kind of eruption is between 1 kilometer to 5 kilometers. It emits about 3,000,000 cubic meters of lava on a weekly basis. This type of volcano is Strombolian/Vulcanian, and a good example is Galeras, Colombia, which last erupted in 1992.

4.) SEVERE (VEI=3): The plume height of this kind of eruption is between 3 kilometers to 15 kilometers. It emits about 30,000,000 cubic meters of lava on a yearly basis. This type of volcano is Vulcanian/Pelean, and a good example is Nevado Del Ruiz, Colombia, which last erupted in 1985.

5.) CATACLYSMIC (VEI=4): The plume height of this kind of eruption is between 10 kilometers to 25 kilometers. It emits about 300,000,000 cubic meters of lava about once a decade. This type of volcano is Pelean/Plinian, and a good example is Galunggung, Indonesia, which last erupted in 1982.

6.) PAROXYSMAL (VEI=5): The plume height of this kind of eruption is about 25 kilometers. It emits about 3 cubic kilometers of lava about once a century. This type of volcano is Plinian, and a good example of this is Mount St. Helens, Washington, which last erupted in 1980.

7.) COLOSSAL (VEI=6): The plume height of this kind of eruption is about 25 kilometers. It emits about 30 cubic kilometers of lava about once a century. This type of volcano is Plinian/Ultra-Plinian, and a good example of is Krakatau, Indonesia, which last erupted in 1883.

8.) SUPER-COLOSSAL (VEI=7): The plume height of this kind of eruption is about 25 kilometers. It emits about 300 cubic kilometers of lava about once every 1,000 years. This type of volcano is Plinian/Ultra-Plinian, and a good example of this is Tambora, Indonesia, which last erupted in 1815.

9.) MEGA-COLOSSAL (VEI=8): The plume height of this kind of eruption is about 25 kilometers. It emits about 3,000 cubic kilometers of lava about once every 10,000 years. This type of volcano is Ultra-Plinian, and a good example of this is Yellowstone, or Mammoth, California. Yellowstone and Mammoth each last erupted over 1 million years ago.

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Some of the volcanoes on the above scale don't seem to really matter. But, if you take a second look, you'll find that although some lesser volcanoes erupt without much damage, every day or week, and others are unlikely to erupt in our collective lifetimes, please reconsider categories 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. These volcanoes types are all active, and can cause much damage, including, in some cases, death.

Mt. Rainier in the Seattle/Tacoma area potentially endangers 3 million Americans. Popocatepetl, south of Mexico City, threatens a million more people, while Naples, Italy is under constant threat from Mt. Vesuvius.

Some of you may remember Mount St. Helens, and have heard the stories about several folks who laughed it off. These same people later died either from the burning hot molten lava flow, or because of the massive mudslide that followed. Mount St. Helens was capped by a glacier which was liquefied by the eruption, sending cascades of mud and debris over a wide area; burning and/or submerging in mud and ash, all buildings, crops, and everything else in its path.

Yellowstone National Park is also a volcanic underground system. It is capable of destroying wild life, human life, property, and the course of rivers.

If you live near a known volcano, active or dormant, you should be prepared to follow instructions from you local officials.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A VOLCANIC ERUPTION:

Like earthquakes, volcanoes occur at plate boundaries in the Earth's crust. While earthquakes occur when plates bump into, or under each other, volcanoes are on **CONVERGENT** (coming together) or **DIVERGENT** (moving apart) places in the Earth's crust. They have the added feature of covering hot spots in the Earth's mantle.

When the plates converge, occasionally one plate will descend under another plate because it is made up of weaker material. This is called **SUBDUCTION**. As the weaker plate gets buried deeper into the Earth's mantle, it will start to melt, forming hot pieces called **MAGMA** which travels upward towards the crust, often in explosive eruptions.

These areas become known as **SUBDUCTION ZONES**, and they tend to form massive cone-shaped volcanoes, known as **STRATOVOLCANOES**, like Mt. Shasta in California or Mt. St. Helens in Washington.

As mentioned before, a volcanic eruption will cause one or more landslides or mudslides. The 1980 Mount St. Helens eruption in the State of Washington created a spectacular example of a massive debris flow because of the glacier which had formerly capped the mouth of the volcano. Areas near the bases of many volcanoes in the Cascade Mountain Range of California, Oregon, and Washington are at risk from the same type of flows during future volcanic eruptions.

Eruptions have also known to trigger earthquakes, tsunamis, acid rain, and **ASHFALL**, also simply called, falling ash. **ASHFALL** is a heavy, odorous, tar-like material which is blown into the atmosphere by an eruption, and then falls back to the ground, damaging most, if not all, property it lands upon.

Communities at risk for volcanic eruptions should have warning systems and disaster plans, including evacuation routes. You should have your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** ready, as you would for any other emergency, especially as the eruptions do cause the other emergencies like landslides and mudslides, and, potentially, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Along with the regular supplies in your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT,** you should be doubly sure to have protective face masks and sturdy shoes, perhaps even boots, and a pair of goggles for every member of your family.

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Go over your family's emergency communication plans, in case family members are separated when an eruption occurs, so that everyone knows the place to reunite in an emergency. This will save time, worry, and minimize confusion, especially during a crisis.

Reconfirm that you do have an out-of-town family member or friend whose home can be made available to you. Again, please offer to reciprocate, as **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER".** Include plans for your pets, as no Red Cross shelter, and few hotels or motels will accept pets, even in emergencies.

To fully understand the importance of planning ahead, and having a well thought out communications network for your community, and responsible leaders and authorities to make it work, consider the eruption of Nevado Del Ruiz, in 1985.

Just over 20 years ago, people in the town of Armero, Columbia laughed when a volcano, which had been dormant for about 150 years, began to rumble. Scientists and then foreign journalists tried warning the people for several weeks, but the town's mayor was giving speeches, assuring the citizens that they had nothing to fear. Armero had no plans and no safety network in place.

When Nevado Del Ruiz erupted, it sent a massive ice ball, which had been capping the volcano, into a nearby river; creating a flood wave that traveled in excess of 300 miles per hour. The resulting mudslide from the eruption created a debris flow of 60 meters deep. Between the flood wave, the mudslide and the molten lava flow, Armero was destroyed within 15 minutes of the initial eruption. 23,000 people, over 90 percent of the population, perished in just 15 minutes, and an entire city was gone.

WHAT TO DO DURING A VOLCANIC ERUPTION:

Although it may seem safe to stay at home and wait out an eruption, doing so can be very dangerous. Stay safe by following the instructions being broadcast to you over your radio or TV. If you are being told to evacuate, follow the exact route you are being told to take. Hot molten lava, mudslides and debris will flow over broad areas, especially once it has had the opportunity to travel downhill, and has hit level ground.

Do not attempt to try to witness the eruption up close if you are fortunate enough not to be near the volcano at the time it blows. It may seem like a "cool" idea, but, again, it will actually turn hot and potentially deadly. You'll be grateful later, when you're alive, and watching it on the news later that day.

Right after an eruption, you must avoid being both downstream and downwind from the eruption. If you are outdoors, try to find indoor shelter. If you become trapped near a landslide, remember to make yourself as small a target as possible, with your arms and hands protecting your head and face.

If you're near a stream, listen for the sound of an approaching mudslide or flood. If you hear it, try to get to higher ground, yet away from either the lava flow or the new danger.

If you are indoors, close all the windows, doors, and dampers. Put all of your machinery inside a garage or barn. If you own livestock or any other animals, try to bring them into a barn, garage, or other enclosed space. The **ASHFALL** burns upon impact.

Stay out of any area defined as a restricted zone by local law enforcement. Effects of a volcanic eruption can be felt many miles away from the volcano. Landslides and mudslides, floods, wild-fires, and even deadly hot lava flow can reach you even if you cannot see the volcano during the eruption. Avoid river valleys and low-lying areas where the lava flow, or mudslide, or flood, (or all three, for that matter,) will likely flow.

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It is also advisable to turn off your car and truck engines if you are near the actual lava flow, as driving will stir up even more ash which clog engines and stall vehicles; possibly resulting in expensive repair bills.

WHAT TO DO AFTER A VOLCANIC ERUPTION:

Because of all of the residual emergencies that can accompany a volcanic eruption, the aftermath of a volcanic eruption can turn out to be one of the most complicated crises of all.

It's like the old joke, "Well, if that doesn't kill you...this will...or, maybe this... Gallows humor aside, you need to have your battery-powered radio, TV or NOAA radio with you at all times, until all potential eventualities have a chance to occur or not. This will take real patience and vigilance; especially if you are caring for small children, the disabled or the elderly. If you're not, but a neighbor is, please offer to help. Even now, **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER".**

You should all be wearing long-sleeved shirts or blouses, long pants and sturdy shoes or boots. Volcanic ash burns upon impact, and will irritate your skin, even if the ash has somewhat cooled.

To protect you and your family from the **ASHFALL**, you should now be wearing your masks and goggles, or have a damp cloth over your nose and mouth. Volcanic ash will irritate your respiratory system.

If you are asthmatic, suffer from bad allergies, or have some sort of respiratory ailment, avoid contact with any amount of ash. You should stay indoors until local health officials announce that it is safe for sensitive people to go outside.

As soon as it is safe to do so, begin to remove the **ASHFALL** from the roofs of buildings. **ASHFALL** is very heavy, and can cause buildings to collapse. As always, exercise caution when working on a roof.



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WILDFIRES

As home prices rise in major cities, or as more people prefer to live "out in the country", while still working in the city, many people have chosen to live in rural areas, near forests or in picturesque, but in somewhat remote mountain sites.

But even as these places become more developed, it doesn't negate the fact that these normally "wide open spaces" face the real danger of wildfires. Wildfires can be ignited by lightning, campfires, hot mufflers and their exhaust pipes on vehicles, an innocent spark off of a neighbor's lawn mower, or even the carelessness of kids playing with matches. Wildfires often begin unnoticed, but spread very quickly.

Please review this manual's section on Fires, but also be aware of the plans you must make, as well as the special tasks you must undertake, in order to be prepared to prevent wildfires, if possible, or to survive, in the event that one does occur.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR WILDFIRES:

1. PRACTICE WILDFIRE SAFETY

a.) Design and landscape your home with wildfire safety in mind. This is achieved by selecting fire-resistant or non-combustible building materials for every building on your property; and by planting hardwood trees, which will help to contain a fire, as opposed to pine, evergreen, eucalyptus, or fir trees, which will fuel a fire.

b.) Coat every building on your property with UL-approved fire-retardant chemicals.

c.) Know and obey your local fire laws. Talk to your local fire department for information. Make sure fire vehicles can get to your home and that your driveway entrances are clearly marked with your last name and address.

d.) Post fire emergency phone numbers around your property so that someone who might have spotted a fire on a remote portion of your property knows where to call for help.

e.) Teach children about fire safety. Keep matches and fireworks of any kind out of their reach.

2. PROTECT YOUR HOME

Besides installing smoke detectors on every floor of every building on your property, and keeping them clean, in good working order, and supplied with fresh batteries each time we change the time on our clocks (usually in April and October), you should:

a.) Regularly clear all roofs and gutters of dead leaves, branches and other debris.

b.) Clean your chimneys at least once a year, and inspect them at least twice a year. Keep the dampers in working condition, and equip chimneys and stovepipes with a spark arrester that meets local fire safety standards.

c.) Install half-inch mesh screen beneath porches, decks, floor areas, and even under the entire home. Screen the openings to the floors, roof and attic as well.

d.) Have at least one fire extinguisher in every building on your property, know how to use it, and teach every member of your family how to use it as well.

e.) Consider installing protective fire shutters or heavy fire-resistant drapes.

f.) Keep a tall ladder near the side of the house; and store some basic household tools which can double as fire tools. These items include one axe, bucket, chainsaw, handsaw, rake, shovel, and a really long garden hose that can reach any building on your property. If you need more than one hose for this job, you should know this before you need it.

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g.) Clear flammable vegetation, leaves, dead branches and twigs regularly. Make a special effort to clear dead branches that extend over roofs.

h.) Remove all rubbish from under all structures on the property on a regular basis and dispose of the waste properly.

i.) Prune tree branches and shrubs to within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.

j.) Make a 15 foot space between trees, and remove all tree limbs within 15 feet of the ground.

k.) Ask the local power company to clear branches from power lines. **DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS YOURSELF, EVEN IF THE POWER COMPANY IS SLOW TO COME DO THIS. A POTENTIAL FIRE IS SAFER THAN YOU WORKING NEAR POWER LINES.**

l.) Mow your lawn regularly, and remove any vines from the walls of your home.

m.) Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Place a screen over the grill, making sure it is made of non-flammable material.

n.) Regularly dispose of trash and newspapers at an approved site.

o.) Place stove, fireplace, and grill ashes in a metal bucket, soak them in water for at least two days, then bury the cold ashes in mineral soil.

p.) Store gasoline, oily rags, and other flammable materials in approved safety cans. Place these cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.

q.) Stack firewood at least 100 feet away from your home.

3. IDENTIFY A BACKUP WATER SUPPLY

If you lose electrical power for any reason, or if there is a fire, or other emergency, you will need a way to get more water than you already have stored in your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT.** Look around your property; is there a swimming pool, well, cistern, small pond, or even a fire department hydrant?

You might consider obtaining a portable gasoline-powered pump.

You should also be sure there are adequate freeze-proof water outlets on at least two sides of every building on your property. Consider installing additional freeze-proof water outlets at least 60-80 feet away from your home for added protection.

As mentioned before, wildfires will lead to destructive debris-flow activity. In July, 1994, a severe wildfire swept Storm King Mountain, west of Glenwood Springs, CO., killing all of the vegetation on the slopes. Heavy rains on the mountain in September, 1994, resulted in numerous slides, one of which blocked Interstate 70 and threatened to dam the Colorado River, cutting off water to several states.

4. HAVE PLANS IN PLACE

Review all emergency plans with your family, as detailed in the other sections of this manual, especially **BASIC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, FIRES, and LANDSLIDES & MUDSLIDES.** If an emergency occurs when the family is separated, all family members should know what to do, who to see, where to go, and how to pitch in and help if they are at home. This will save time, minimize confusion, and potentially avert real disaster.

If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening your area, keep informed by listening to your battery-powered radio or TV. Follow the instructions that are being given over the air.

Make plans to evacuate in case you have to by grabbing your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, double-checking that it is stocked with the supplies it should have. Replace anything you think is missing as quickly as you can, if you

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can, with supplies you have on hand. Everyone in your family should now put on long-sleeved shirts or blouses, long pants and sturdy shoes or boots. Have someone call your out-of-town contact and let that person know what is happening. If you are asked to evacuate, make sure this person knows you're leaving, and where you plan to go.

Back your car into the garage, or park it in an open space facing the direction out and away from the fire danger. Put your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT,** and anything else you deem essential into the rear of the car.

If there is time, retrieve all of your valuables; and do the following before leaving your home:

a.) Lock all of the doors, and close all windows, blinds or non-combustible window coverings, and heavy drapes. Remove any lightweight curtains.

b.) Shut off the gas main, and turn off the pilot lights.

c.) Open the fireplace damper, but close the fireplace screens.

d.) Turn off the ringers on your telephones, and unplug all of your electrical appliances to prevent possible sparks.

e.) Leave one light on in each room to potentially increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.

f.) Turn off propane tanks.

g.) Remember your pets, and the plans you've already made for them.

h.) If you have been asked to help an elderly or disabled member of your Neighborhood Watch, please remember that person is relying on you. If, for any reason, you are not able to help this person, contact your back up, it is your responsibility. Please take it seriously!

If there is still time, or if you are being allowed to stay at your home, add these steps to the eight steps just above:

a.) Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.

b.) Place combustible patio furniture indoors.

c.) Connect the garden hose to the outside taps, and wet or remove all shrubs within 15 feet of the house.

d.) Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and wet the roof.

e.) Wet the above-ground fuel tanks.

f.) Gather the ladder and the fire tools.

WHAT TO DO DURING WILDFIRES:

If the fire hazard is not close to you by this time, consider yourself fortunate, but continue as if it's on its way. It just may be.

Make sure you have completed all of the steps above. (Remember, you wanted to live "out in the country" after all.)

If you are sure that you're going to leave, no matter what, make sure your family is safe. It is now probably time to shut off the electricity, **BUT NOT THE WATER, and LEAVE!** The firefighters may need your water to help fight the fire. Some people may choose to continue to leave one light on in each room; perhaps this is a personal choice, or one which should be made after speaking with your local fire department about the matter.

If you're waiting to be told to evacuate, make sure you do so immediately after you have been advised to leave. As stated before, your family is more important than your property. By continuing to listen to the battery-powered radio or TV you have with you, follow a route away from the fire hazards. Drive very cautiously, and watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

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WHAT TO DO AFTER WILDFIRES:

If you are with burn victims, or if you are burned, cool and cover the injuries to reduce the chance of further injury or infection, and wait for the paramedics to arrive.

If you don't smell gas, and your home appears safe to occupy, follow the basic rules of looking for and extinguishing any small fires, keeping unnecessary appliances unplugged, keeping all unnecessary lights off, and try to eliminate any other potential hazards. Clean up whatever may be broken or unusable, and dispose of it properly.

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When the fire danger has passed, and information you heard or seen on the radio or TV has confirmed this, you may attempt to return to inspect your property, if you are allowed to do so by local authorities. Remember to have on your sturdy shoes, as the chance is great for there to be debris about, even if your home seems relatively untouched. Just be careful, look at the area around you, and be sure it is safe for you and your family to be at home. If you failed to turn off your gas main before you evacuated, smell for gas before attempting to enter your home. If you do smell gas, immediately turn off the gas main, open the windows, and keep everybody outdoors.

If your home has been destroyed, you and your family, but not your pets, can go to the local Red Cross shelter. If you are forced to leave your premises, remember to keep your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** with you, as it still has copies of all of your important documents with you, not to mention your supplies.

If it is dark, only use flashlights. Candles are a fire hazard and should not be used. If you want to use a generator, you must be certain the model you wish to use is approved by Underwriter's Laboratories, or a similar organization. It is wise to speak to a licensed, qualified electrician before purchasing, or using any generator, for guidelines and tips on how to best use one. Generators should never be run inside your house or garage. Always operate it outdoors. Only connect the appliances you are actually going to be using to the outlets on the generator. **NEVER** connect your home's entire electrical system to a generator. It is extremely hazardous.

Finally, be sure it is absolutely safe to do so before turning the gas main back on, or before you attempt to drink or use tap water, or plug your appliances and computers back into wall outlets. **DO NOT ASSUME, ASCERTAIN THE TRUTH** from your local gas, water and electricity providers. If any of them insists on a professional inspection, please comply for your family's sake, and, in the practical sense, to be sure your insurance company is satisfied, and has no reason to delay payment for repairs.

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WINTER STORMS AND COLD WAVES

While the danger from winter weather varies across the country, nearly all Americans, regardless of where they live, are likely to endure some type of severe winter weather at some point in their lives. This includes snow, subfreezing temperatures, strong winds, heavy rain, or ice storms. One of the primary concerns about severe winter weather is its ability to knock out heat, power and communications to your home or office, sometimes for days or weeks at a time.

During a severe winter storm, you should be prepared to stay inside and make it on your own, at least for a period of time. If you have a wood burning fireplace, consider storing enough wood to keep you warm for a long period of time, in case winter weather knocks out your heater or furnace.

Think twice before going out during winter storms. If you do go outside, dress appropriately, and be careful walking on snowy and icy sidewalks. Everyone is potentially at risk, and the actual threat depends on your specific situation. Some recent statistics concerning winter storm-related fatalities reveal that about 55 percent of winter deaths occur in cars, about 25 percent are due to people being caught outside in a storm, and 20 percent occur at homes, mostly because those folks had no heat. Of those who die from exposure to cold weather, 50 percent are over 60 years old, and 75 percent are male.

Heaters are life savers in these situations, and for many elderly people, they are a must. But for many older Americans and the poor, having a heater has become an unaffordable luxury. Because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER",** wouldn't another great project for your Neighborhood Watch group be to reach out to those among you less fortunate, and get them heaters? If your group cannot afford to provide units for everyone, how about creating one very large heated central room or banquet hall in your community, where people could congregate during severe cold?

There are several weather-related terms to know about wintertime. You should familiarize yourself with them, if you don't already know what they mean. They include:

1.) BLIZZARD: Winds over 35 miles per hour, with blowing snow reducing visibility to near zero. Once the blizzard strikes, it can knock down trees, utility poles, and power lines. Blizzards near the coast can cause coastal flooding and beach erosion as well as sink ships at sea.

2.) BLIZZARD WARNING: Heavy snow and strong winds will produce a blinding snow, with near zero visibility, deep snowdrifts, and life-threatening cold. You should seek shelter immediately!

3.) BLOWING SNOW: Wind-driven snow that reduces visibility and causes significant drifting. Blowing snow may be snow that is falling and/or loose snow on the ground picked up by the wind.

4.) EXTREME COLD: Extreme cold often accompanies a winter storm or is left in its wake. Prolonged exposure to the cold can cause frostbite or hypothermia and become life-threatening. Infants and elderly people are most at risk. The definition of EXTREME COLD varies in different areas of the United States, as areas unaccustomed to winter weather may consider near freezing temperatures EXTREME COLD. Freezing temperatures can cause severe damage to citrus fruit crops and other vegetation. Pipes may freeze and burst in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat. One way to prevent this from happening is to let a small amount of water run into the pipes on a constant basis. In the north, below zero temperatures may be considered EXTREME COLD. Long cold spells can cause rivers to freeze, disrupting shipping. Ice jams may form and lead to flooding

5.) FREEZING RAIN: Rain that falls onto a surface with a temperature below freezing. This causes it to freeze to surfaces, creating a coating of ice on roads and walkways.

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6.) FROSTBITE: Damage to body tissue caused by that tissue being frozen. FROSTBITE causes a loss of feeling and a bluish-white, pale appearance in extremities, like fingers, toes, ear lobes, or the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately! If you must wait for help, slowly warm the affected areas. However, if the person is also showing signs of HYPOTHERMIA, warm his torso before his arms or legs.

7.) FROST WARNING: Temperatures below freezing are expected and may cause significant damage to plants, crops, or fruit trees. In areas unaccustomed to freezing temperatures, people who have homes without heat need to take added precautions.

8.) HEAVY SNOW STORMS: Too much snow can immobilize a region and paralyze a city, stranding commuters, stopping the flow of supplies, and disrupting emergency and medical services. Accumulations of snow can collapse buildings and knock down trees and power lines. In rural areas, homes and farms may be isolated for days, and unprotected livestock may be lost. In the mountains, HEAVY SNOW can lead to avalanches. The cost of snow removal, repairing damages, and loss of business can have large economic impacts on cities and towns.

9.) HYPOTHERMIA: The body temperature becomes dangerously low due to severe cold. Warning signs include an uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion.

10.) ICE STORMS: Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees, electrical wires, telephone poles and lines, and communication towers. Even small accumulations of ice may cause extreme hazards to motorists and pedestrians.

11.) SLEET: Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. SLEET usually bounces when hitting a surface and does not stick to objects. However, it can accumulate like snow, and cause roads to freeze and to become slippery.

12.) SNOW FLURRIES: Light snow which falls for short durations. No accumulation or light dusting is all that is expected.

13.) SNOW SHOWERS: Snow which falls at varying intensities for brief periods of time. Some accumulation is possible.

14.) SNOW SQUALLS: Brief, intense snow showers accompanied by strong, gusty winds. Accumulation may be significant. Snow squalls are best known in the Great Lakes region.

15.) WIND CHILL: Based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by the combined effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, heat is carried away from a person's body at an accelerated rate, driving down the body temperature.

16.) WINTER STORM WARNING: Severe weather conditions have begun or will begin very soon. Plan to stay indoors during this storm. If you must go outside, several layers of lightweight clothing will keep you warmer than a single heavy coat. Gloves and a hat will prevent loss of body heat. Keep your mouth covered at all time to protect your lungs from the cold.

17.) WINTER STORM WATCH: Severe weather like heavy snow or ice is possible in the next day or two. Keep informed by having your radio, TV or NOAA radio on at all times, and be alert to changing weather conditions. Avoid unnecessary travel.

18.) WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY: Cold, ice and snow are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. If caution is used, these conditions should not be life-threatening.

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HOW TO PREPARE FOR WINTER STORMS & COLD WAVES:

Begin by making sure that your **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** is well-stocked, has fresh supplies inside, and has extra winter-related clothing and bedding. This includes a warm coat, scarves, gloves or mittens, hat, thermal socks and water-resistant boots for each member of your family.

Remember to layer your clothes for additional warmth.

Make sure that your vehicle has been readied for winter before winter storm season begins. This includes replenishing anti-freeze, and buying snow chains for your tires. If you already have snow chains, you should know how to put them on, or have them installed at the first sign of a snow storm.

WHAT TO DO DURING WINTER STORMS & COLD WAVES:

Avoid traveling by car during a storm, but if you must, always have you **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT**, fully stocked, with you.

Make sure that your vehicle always has at least half a tank of gas at all times, but try to make an extra effort to have a full tank of gasoline during winter.

You may need the extra gas for emergency use, and having a full tank also keeps the fuel line from freezing.

Let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive. If you vehicle gets stuck along the way, help can be sent along your predetermined route.

If you get stuck:

a.) Stay with your car. Don't try to walk to safety.

b.) Tie a brightly colored cloth, preferably red, to the antenna for rescuers to see.

c.) Start the car and use the heater for about 10 minutes each hour.

d.) Keep the exhaust pipe clear so fumes won't back up in the car.



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e.) Leave an overhead light on when the engine is running so that you can be seen.

f.) As you sit, keep moving your arms and legs to keep blood circulating and to stay warm.

g.) Keep one window, which is not facing the blowing wind, open so that air can get into your vehicle.

h.) After the snow stops falling, raise your hood, indicating trouble.

If you get stuck outside without a car or any other shelter, you need to continue to try to find shelter, but also try to stay dry, and cover all exposed parts of your body. Prepare a lean-to, wind-break, or snow cave for protection from the wind. Build a fire for heat and to attract attention. Place rocks around the fire to absorb and reflect heat.

Do not eat snow, as it will lower you body temperature. Melt it first, and then drink it.

If you are inside, try to stay there. When using alternative heat from a fireplace, wood stove, space heater, make sure the area is properly ventilated to avoid breathing in deadly carbons and toxins, and always use fire safeguards.

If you have no heat, close off all unneeded rooms, stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors, and cover your windows at night. Eat and drink regularly, as food provides the body with energy for producing its own heat, and fluids prevent dehydration. Wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing. Remove excess layers to avoid overheating, perspiration, and subsequent chill.

WHAT TO DO AFTER WINTER STORMS & COLD WAVES:

As always, you must continue to listen to the radio, TV or NOAA radio for further updates on weather conditions, and for updated information and instructions. Understand that access may be limited to some parts of the community, or roads may be blocked. Also, major winter storms are often followed by even colder conditions.

Avoid driving and other travel until conditions have improved. Roads may be blocked by snow or emergency vehicles.

Help your neighbors who may require special assistance, like the disabled, or the elderly. After an emergency, some larger families may find they need help caring for their children, or even infants. Offer your assistance, because **"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER".**

If you shovel snow, be extremely careful. It is physically strenuous work, so take frequent breaks to avoid overexertion. Heart attacks from shoveling heavy snow are a leading cause of deaths during winter.

If you think you have encountered a person suffering from **HYPOTHERMIA**, quickly check their temperature. If it is below 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 Celsius), immediately call 9-1-1. If medical care is not readily available, begin warming the person slowly. Warm the body core first. You can use your own body heat to help. Get the person into dry clothing, and wrap them in a warm blanket covering the head and neck. Do not give the person alcohol, drugs, coffee, any hot beverage or food; warm broth is best. Do not warm the arms and legs first! This drives the cold blood towards the heart and can lead to heart failure.

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EXTRA PREPARATIONS FOR BUSINESSES:

Just how fast your company can get back to productivity after an emergency situation often depends on the amount of emergency preparedness done today. Though each situation is unique, any organization can be better prepared if it plans carefully, puts emergency procedures in place, and practices for emergencies of all kinds.

America's businesses for the backbone of the nation's economy, and according to the Department of Homeland Security, small business alone accounts for more than 69 percent of all companies with employees. In addition, this same report states that small businesses employ 50 percent of all private sector workers and provide nearly 45 percent of the nation's payroll. If businesses become ready to survive and recover from any emergency, be it natural or manmade, America and its economy is more secure. A commitment to planning today will help support employees, customers, the community, the local economy and even the country. It also protects your business investment and gives your company a better chance for survival.

You have had a chance to review what has already been outlined and discussed in this manual. What will be introduced now are a few extra pointers specifically for businesses. We will try not to be repetitive, as we know your time is valuable, but we will err on the side of caution.

Here is a simple checklist, areas to cover, and some questions to ponder, as you form the basis of your firm's plan:

1.) BE INFORMED:

a.) Know what you might face.

b.) Which natural disasters are most common in the each of the areas you operate?

2.) CONTINUITY PLANNING:

a.) What makes your company run?

b.) Review your business process flow chart.

c.) Identify all operations critical to your firm's survival.

d.) Determine the potential cost of an emergency.

e.) Establish procedures for succession of management; include somebody who does not work at the same office everyone else does.

f.) Identify suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses you rely on each day.

g.) Develop a back up to each one of the companies in Group F.

h.) Create a contact list for every vital person or business you will need in an emergency.

i.) What will your firm do if your building becomes unavailable?

j.) Devise a plan for payroll continuity.

k.) Who are your firm's strongest and most trustworthy players? Before answering, consider all of the special circumstances an emergency might entail.

l.) Those chosen to be involved in formulating the emergency plan need to have their specific roles defined.

m.) Develop a back up to each one of the employees in Group K.

n.) Coordinate with others in your building, local law enforcement, first responders, utility companies, community groups, suppliers, shippers, and others you regularly do business with.

o.) Share your general plans with other businesses, and encourage them to make their own plans.

p.) Review your plan annually.

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3.) EMERGENCY PLANNING:

a.) Two-way communication is crucial before, during and after a disaster.

b.) All employees should be made aware of all emergency preparedness decisions as they occur via company newsletter, or special memo, etc. If some method of voting on certain aspects of the plan can be achieved, this might boost morale, and overall excitement for the plan.

c.) Consider setting up a telephone calling tree, a password protected page on the company website, an e-mail alert or a call-in recording to communicate with employees during a crisis.

d.) Set up an out-of-town phone number where employees can leave an "I'm OK" message in the event of a catastrophic event.

e.) Provide all employees with wallet cards which detail instructions on how to get company information during an emergency. Include special phone numbers or Internet passwords for easy reference.

f.) Choose employee ombudsmen (ombudswomen), who are regular employees who also are responsible for communicating regularly with all employees.

g.) Include employees with disabilities in your plans. Determine what special aid each disabled member of your staff might need during an event. Engage people with physical disabilities in emergency planning, and recruit able-bodied employees who would volunteer as support staff to aid disabled workers in an emergency.

h.) Frequently review and practice your emergency plans.

4.) EMERGENCY SUPPLIES:

a.) Determine how your firm will store an ample supply of fresh water, food, blankets and/or sleeping bags, and dust/filter masks, plastic sheeting & duct tape for possible "shelter-in-place" scenarios.

b.) Encourage all employees to create an office **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT.**

c.) Obtain a battery-powered radio, battery-powered TV and a NOAA radio with the SAME feature for the office.

d.) Keep copies of important records such as site maps, building plans, insurance policies, employee contact and identification information, bank account records, supplier and shipping contact lists, computer backups, emergency or law enforcement contact information and other priority documents in a portable, waterproof, fireproof container. Store a second set at an off-site location, preferably a bank safe deposit box.

e.) Discuss with all employees which emergency supplies the firm can feasibly supply, and which supplies the employees should consider keeping on hand at the office.

5.) DECIDING TO STAY OR GO:

a.) Devise a "shelter-in-place" plan. This will include taking all possible emergencies discussed into account, a timetable for deciding whether to stay or go depending on the crisis and developing a system which will allow your firm to account for all employees. You will need to establish a warning system, test the system regularly, and account for those with hearing difficulties and for those who do not speak English. Decide how you will handle a scenario where someone refuses to "shelter-in-place". They can't be forced, yet there may be times when local authorities will order everyone to stay put. So that there are no surprises during a crisis, interview all employees to see if there are those who will not cooperate, and come to some compromise.

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If there are tasks that need to be assigned, do so before the emergency situation to save time and minimize confusion. Also, make sure that employees understand that they need to create their own **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** for the office, and need to have it on hand during drills, and, of course, during an actual event.

b.) Devise an evacuation plan. This will include taking all possible emergencies discussed into account, a timetable for deciding whether to stay or go depending on the crisis and developing a system which will allow your firm to account for all employees. You will need to establish a warning system, test the system regularly, and account for those with hearing difficulties and for those who do not speak English.

Create a chain of command so that every employee knows who is authorized to order an evacuation, who is the person responsible for ordering a shut down of crucial operations, and who is the person who will physically lock the doors (last person out). Locate and create site maps which clearly show two ways out of your facility from different locations throughout your facility. Consider the feasibility of emergency lighting versus a supply of flashlights and batteries should there be a blackout. Designate assembly sites, both near your facility, and one in the general area, in case you have to move farther away. Talk to your employees about the importance of reuniting at these assembly sites, or letting someone know if they have to leave. Determine who is authorized to provide an all-clear, return-to-work notification. Also, make sure that employees understand that they need to create their own **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT** for the office, and need to have it on hand during drills, and, of course, during an actual event.

6.) FIRE SAFETY:

The most common of all business disasters; it is the easiest to prepare and practice for, and should involve absolutely everyone, even part-time employees and temps.

a.) Have your office, plant or facility inspected for fire safety; ensure compliance with fire codes and regulations.

b.) Install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in appropriate locations.

c.) Consider an automatic sprinkler system, fire hoses, and fire-resistant doors and walls.

d.) Establish a warning system, test the system regularly, and account for those with hearing difficulties and for those who do not speak English.

e.) Decide how the fire department will be alerted. They will help you decide the best course of action.

f.) Plan and practice how people will evacuate in a fire.

7.) MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

a.) Encourage employees to take a Basic First Aid course and CPR training. Offer on-site classes for your co-workers.

b.) Stock First Aid supplies, and make them easily accessible.

c.) Encourage employee to talk about medical conditions that may require support or special care in an emergency.

d.) Keep current employee emergency contact information on file. Store a copy with other vital records in your "office-sized" portable water-proof, fire-proof **BASIC EMERGENCY KIT.**

8.) TALK TO YOUR PEOPLE:

a.) Involve co-workers in all levels of Emergency Planning.

b.) Promote Preparedness—Encourage employees to create a BASIC EMERGENCY KIT, MAKE A PLAN, and GET INFORMED.

c.) Practice the Plan--drills & exercises will help everyone be better prepared.

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d.) Detail how you will be in contact with employees, customers & others during a disaster.

e.) Employee Health; Specifically understanding that some people who have experienced a disaster may have special recovery needs.

9.) PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT:

a.) Review your insurance coverage for Physical Losses, Flood Coverage and Business Interruption—understand what your policies cover and what they do not. Know what your deductible is, if applicable.

Consider how you will be able to pay your creditors, employees and yourself if your business is interrupted by either a natural emergency or a manmade crisis. Determine exactly which records your insurance provider will want to see after an emergency and store them in a safe place.

b.) Utility Disruptions—Prepare for extended outages during and after a crisis. Understand which utilities are vital for your day-to-day business, and identify possible alternatives and back-up options. Decide if portable generators are worth the risks they pose. Plan a secondary means of accessing the Internet if it is vital to your company's day-to-day operations. If food storage is an issue for your business, identify an ice and/or dry ice vendor in advance of a crisis.

c.) Take Steps to Secure Your Facility, Building or Plant—Install fire extinguishers and smoke detectors if they are not already in place. Locate and make available building and site maps for first responders in the event of an emergency. Consider if you could benefit from having automatic fire sprinklers, alarm systems, closed circuit TV, access control, security guards, or other security measures in place.

d.) Review your equipment - Determine which items need to be secured in event of an Earthquake, Flood, Hurricane, Landslide or Mudslide, Tornado or some other natural or manmade disaster.

e.) Assess Your Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning Units to Improve Air Quality—Take a critical look at your heating, ventilation and air conditioning system to determine if it is in proper condition, if it can be tampered with, and if it can be feasibly be upgraded to better filter potential contaminants. Be sure you know how to turn it off, and then let other managers know how to work it as well.

f.) Protect Your Data and Information Technology Systems—Install firewalls and spyware on your computers.

10. HIGH RISE BUILDING SAFETY:

In a high rise building, always know where the closest emergency exit is. Be sure you know another way out in case your first choice is blocked. Take cover against a desk or table if things are falling. Move away from file cabinets, book shelves or other things that might fall. Face away from windows and glass, and move away from exterior walls. Determine if you should stay put, shelter-in-place, or get away. Listen for instructions, and then follow them. Always have your BASIC EMERGENCY KIT, unless there is a reason to believe it has been contaminated. Do not use elevators. Stay to the right when going down stairwells to allow emergency workers to come up.

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ONE LAST THOUGHT FOR BOTH BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS:

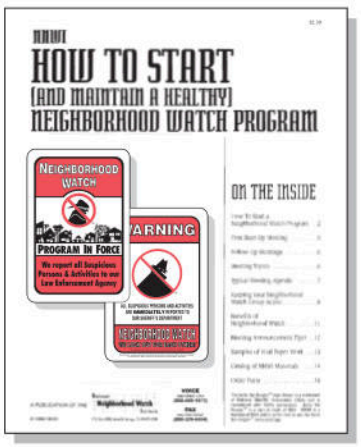
Every large city in the U.S., and most municipalities, has a department in city government whose task it is to devise plans for all kinds of emergencies, budget for these emergencies, obtain necessary funding from the city, state and federal government, respond, and even to award grants to firms and individuals to train emergency responders, create and implement the most current communications network, and to keep current on all new intelligence. If your firm believes it can implement a better and or faster way to improve the emergency system in your area and is able to comply with oversight and monitoring, do not hesitate to present your plan.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

Whether you live in a large city or a small town, ask local law enforcement or your city government about their plans.

It is your right.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH HANDBOOKS

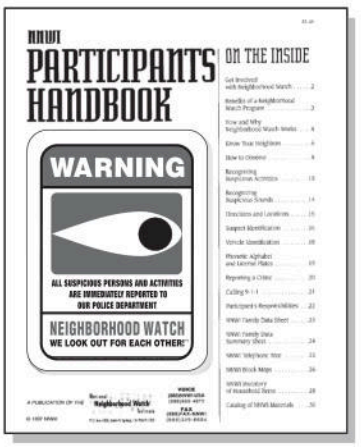


How to Start a Neighborhood Watch Program

16pp, two color (Masked Bad Guy and Boris the Burglar℠ are red and black - Blue Eye is blue and black), approximately 8-1/2" x 11" (letter) size. This handbook gives you a week by week agenda to start your program; what you do at the first meeting and then at subsequent meetings. Gives suggested meeting topics: 22 ideas of other things a NW group can do, a sample flyer to kick off your meeting and samples of the paper work which make the program work.

Want to start a program? Here's how!

Single Copy: $2.30



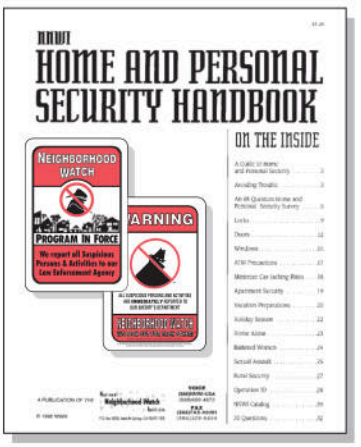
Participants' Handbook

32pp, two color (Masked Bad Guy and Boris the Burglar℠ are red and black - Blue Eye is blue and black), approximately 8-1/2" x 11" (letter) size. This handbook provides a comprehensive guide to the benefits of joining Neighborhood Watch, how the program works, getting involved with your neighbors for mutual aid, direction and location training, instruction in observation and recognition, suspicious activities and sounds, suspect and vehicle identification, how to report a crime, etc.

Our most popular

A must for every Participant

Single Copy: $3.45



Home and Personal Security Handbook

32pp, two color (Masked Bad Guy and Boris the Burglar℠ are red and black - Blue Eye is blue and black), approximately 8-1/2" x 11" (letter) size. This handbook is an excellent guide covering home security and safety, with check lists and illustrations of many types of doors, windows and locks. Operation Identification, tips on the prevention of car-jacking, what to avoid and do in the event of a sexual assault, preventing ATM hold-ups, special emphasis on apartment and rural security, vacation preparations and kids home alone.

This is an excellent "How to...." Guide.

Single Copy: $3.45

All English Handbooks, Signs and Decals are available in Red Masked Bad Guy and Boris the Burglar℠ or Blue Eye Versions as shown above.

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NNWI's PERSONAL BASIC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CHECK LIST

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Home phone (____) _____ — Cell (____) _____ — Cell (____) _____ —

Police phone (____) _____ — Fire (____) _____ — Hospital(____) _____ —

Primary Doctor's name _____ Doctor's phone (____) _____ —

Nearest Relative _____ Relative's phone (____) _____ —

Out-of-town contact person _____ Out-of-town contact phone (____) _____ —

Family Meeting Place _____

Next of Kin in event of Serious Injury or Death _____ Next of Kin phone (____) _____ —

- ☐ Kids and Elder Care preparations made
- ☐ Work place insurance / medical information current
- ☐ List of medications in wallet or purse
- ☐ Dust masks, plastic sheeting or heavy trash bags
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Pet(s) food and water
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Duct tape
- ☐ Extra clothing
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Air purifier
- ☐ Sleeping bags and blankets
- ☐ First aid and manual
- ☐ Whistles
- ☐ Family documents
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Tools (wrench and pliers) Gas shut-off wrench
- ☐ Paper and pen or pencils
- ☐ Radio with extra (new) batteries
- ☐ Towelettes, garbage bags, plastic ties
- ☐ Cash and coins (small denominations)
- ☐ NOAA weather radio
- ☐ Feminine supplies
- ☐ Local map
- ☐ Flashlight with extra (new) batteries
- ☐ Paper cups, plates, utensils and towels
- ☐ Activities for children
- ☐ Chlorine (plain bleach) and medicine dropper
- ☐ Matches (in water proof container)
- ☐ Playing cards

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