
Family Survival Planning

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EMERGENCY CHECKLIST FOR YOUR HOME

Home is where you can do the most to be prepared. But remember if you are only home for about 1/2 of the hours in a day, you must also have additional supplies in your car.

- Strap the water heater to the wall. Remember your water heater is a large source of water, and weighs several hundred pounds when full. A four hundred pound water heater will break gas lines on its way to the floor.
- Strap or bolt any other gas appliances to the wall. Gas appliances are a real danger in an earthquake, and are the cause of most fires after a quake.
- Know where to shut off the water, power, and gas and have placed the tools at each location.
- Make sure your house is bolted to its foundation.
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections. These are potential fire risks. Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Replace solid gas lines with flexible lines on stoves, water heaters, and dryers.
- Nail plywood on top of ceiling joists inside the attic to protect people from chimney bricks that could fall through the ceiling.
- Secure anything that might fall on someone's head.
- Move the bleach and ammonia to separate locations. These chemicals, when mixed, will create a toxic gas as deadly as any ever created.
- Know the unsafe locations in the house.
- Make an emergency plan and know escape routes and meeting places.
- Install [emergency lighting](#) in selected outlets.
- Know the location of the nearest police, fire station, and hospital.
- Know which neighbors have medical experience.
- Talk with neighbors about emergency preparedness.
- Evaluate what supplies your family needs to store.
- Have the [proper amount of water stored](#) for emergency use.
- Store [emergency food supplies](#).
- Store [cooking items](#) for emergency use.

- Know where to find drinkable water in your house or have [water purification](#) equipment.
- Store emergency items to use as [shelter](#).
- Have a [first aid kit](#).
- Have tools handy that you will need in an emergency.
- Store [sanitation supplies](#).
- Store supplies for the baby.
- Stored miscellaneous supplies including money for emergency use.

Know your house:

- Place a flashlight or an emergency light next to your breaker panel.
- Place a wrench in your water meter box located near the street.
- Place or attach a tool on your gas meter for turning off the gas.
- Evaluate each room in your house. Ask yourself: what will fall on my head, or will keep me from getting out if it fell? Secure anything you find.
- Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches, and anywhere people sit.
- Fasten shelves securely to walls and place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass, and china in low, closed cabinets with latches.
- Store household chemicals on a bottom shelf of a closed cabinet.
- Identify the best and worst places to be in your house. Remember that you might not have any choice as to where you will be located when a disaster strikes. The best places inside the house are under major beams that are secured to the rest of the structure, or in strong doorways, or inner structural walls. The worst places are in front of windows, or near fireplaces and chimneys.
- Make an emergency plan including escape routes and [meeting places](#). Choose both a nearby meeting place and an out-of-state relative to be your check-in contact for the family.
- Test your emergency plan with all members of the family present.
- Plug [emergency lighting](#) into selected outlets. These types of lights are constantly charged, and turn on automatically when power fails, or the units are unplugged.
- Keep all tree and shrub limbs trimmed so they don't come in contact with the wires.
- Keep trees adjacent to buildings free of dead or dying wood.

- Store combustible or flammable materials in approved safety containers and keep them away from the house.
- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and near sleeping areas.

Know your neighbors, and neighborhood:

- Contact your school district to obtain policy regarding how children will be released from school in the event of an emergency.
- Know the location of the nearest police and fire stations, as well as the route to the nearest hospital emergency room.
- Meet with neighbors and find out who has medical experience.
- If you are taking this preparedness thing seriously, [share this information](#) with the households next to you. The more people you can convince to prepare, the greater your group resources. Remember that you will be called upon by all around you for help, especially by those who didn't take warnings seriously.
- Share spare keys with your trusted neighbors. Show them where the utility shutoffs are and ask how to turn off your neighbors utilities.
- Provide them with a list of contact phone numbers.

Know your family:

- Hold a home evacuation drill to test [your emergency plan](#) with all members of the family present.
- Teach your children how to get help from neighbors and 911.
- Keep photos of family members in wallet in case they turn up missing.
- Teach household members how to turn off utilities.
- In case family members are separated from one another during an earthquake (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school), [develop a plan for reuniting after the disaster](#).
- Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

This list is by no means "complete". There may be other items that your family would need.

For more detailed information, as well as other checklists, visit our web site at:
www.family-survival-planning.com