

# Types of Emergencies

No matter what type of emergency you're facing, knowledge is your best defense. Planning ahead and getting prepared will arm you with the essential information that is crucial for emergency readiness.

Emergencies take many different forms. On the smaller scale, emergencies may include house fires and car accidents. Large-scale emergencies include natural disasters, technological hazards, like power plant failures, and terrorism.

## Emergency? Call 9-1-1

9-1-1 is your go-to source when you need immediate assistance from the police, fire department, or emergency medical personnel. You should call 9-1-1 if:

- You see a house or building on fire.
- There has been a car accident, especially if someone has been injured.
- A crime is in progress.
- There is a medical emergency, including, but not limited to, uncontrollable bleeding, lost consciousness, chest pains, allergic reactions, and difficulty breathing.

## Be prepared to answer questions when you call 9-1-1. These questions might include:

- The location and the street address of the emergency.
- The nature of the emergency.
- The phone number from which you are calling.
- Additional details about the emergency. You may be asked to describe any injuries, medical symptoms, the locations of any fires burning, or any person who is suspected of having committed a crime.

Follow all instructions that the dispatcher gives you and only hang up once you are instructed to do so. If you call 9-1-1 by accident, don't hang up. The dispatcher might think that an emergency exists and send responders to your location. Instead, explain to the dispatcher what has happened.

Remember, 9-1-1 is for emergencies only! Do not call 9-1-1 unless there is a dangerous or life-threatening situation with which you need help.

## RESOURCES

Federal Emergency Management Agency:  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

9-1-1 Resource Center:  
[www.911.gov/resources.html](http://www.911.gov/resources.html)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.emergency.cdc.gov](http://www.emergency.cdc.gov)

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# WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY



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# Large-Scale Emergencies

Large-scale emergencies such as flooding, hurricanes, tornadoes, acts of terror, or hazardous material leaks can affect hundreds or thousands of people. As such, 9-1-1 may not be available. In situations like these, when you may have to wait for emergency assistance, it's important that you are ready and prepared to take care of yourself and your family



## Get Informed, Be Prepared

While you can't know what type of emergency may arise, there are preventative steps you can take:

- Know the risks and identify hazards. Research what types of natural disasters are common in your area.
- Minimize the impact of potential disasters. You may want to purchase extra insurance, especially for disasters like floods. Property upgrades, like elevating a home, flood proofing, or installing storm windows, can help protect your home and belongings during a disaster.
- Being prepared will reduce the fear and anxiety that typically surround emergencies and their aftermath.

# Family Disaster Plan

A family disaster plan is a vital element of emergency preparedness. Every member of your family should be familiar with this plan. Your emergency plan should address the following:

- Escape and evacuation routes – Create a floor plan of your home with two escape routes from each room. Become familiar with the evacuation routes from your home, school, or work.
- Develop a family communication plan – Provide each family member with a contact card. This card should include the cell phone numbers for each family member, as well as a designated out-of-state contact. Family members should notify the out-of-state contact that they are safe during a disaster.
- Utility shut-off – To prevent natural gas explosions following a disaster, know how to safely shut off your gas. Also know how to shut off the water and the electricity.
- Important records – Ensure that you're adequately covered by property, health, and/or life insurance. Have copies of these documents, as well as deeds, titles, identification and credit cards, stored in a safe location.
- Special needs – Should anyone in your family require extra assistance or special items during a disaster, make sure to account for these necessities.
- Pet care – Keep extra pet supplies, current veterinary records and proper identification on hand. If you have large animals, ensure that you have the capability to evacuate or shelter them.
- Safety skills – Take classes in first aid and CPR. Everyone should also know how to use a fire extinguisher.

# Disaster Supplies Kit

Your emergency kit should contain enough supplies for at least three days. Keeping multiple emergency kits (at home, in your car, and at work) ensures that you'll always be prepared. A basic supplies kit will contain:

- Water – One gallon of water per person, per day.
- Non-perishable food
- A manual can opener
- A first aid kit
- A flashlight
- A battery-operated radio
- Extra batteries
- Waterproof matches
- Toiletries (moist towelettes, toilet paper, etc.)
- Cash
- Copies of credit and identification cards
- Supplies for infants and/or pets
- Special needs items and medications
- Extra clothing and warm clothing, if necessary
- Blankets
- A whistle to signal for help



## Things to Remember in an Emergency

- It's normal to feel anxious or fearful, but it's essential to keep calm.
- Use common sense.
- Think before you act. You'll want to act quickly, but don't rush. Rushing can lead to poor decisions.
- Do not move a seriously injured person unless there is an immediate danger, like a fire or flood.
- Follow all instructions provided by local authorities.
- For non-emergency communications during disaster situations, text family or friends. Reserve phone calls for emergency communications only. Phone calls can congest the network, making it difficult for emergency responders.

**Knowing when to call for emergency assistance and being prepared can mean the difference between life and death.**

