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Governor

# PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY: THE SMART THING TO DO



## Why Prepare?

If you think about it, you take precautions every day, not just when a snowstorm is coming. For instance, you wear your seat belt in the car just in case you are in an accident. You make your children wear helmets when they ride their bicycles. You double check your iron to make sure it is unplugged.

Preparing for emergencies is not new. Your grandparents probably had extra supplies in their home: soap and shampoo in bathroom closets, onions and potatoes stored in the basement, and canned goods on pantry shelves. They understood the value and wisdom of having a little extra on hand for emergencies.

All states have disasters, even New Hampshire. We have ice storms, tornadoes, floods, and power outages. It is smart to prepare for the unexpected.

This brochure can help you to plan to keep your family safe in an emergency. It will help you to:

- Make an emergency kit
- Make a family communications plan
- Make a family evacuation plan
- Make a plan for people with in-home care needs



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## Step 1: Make Your Emergency Kit

Making a kit is easier than you think. In fact, you can start with the basics and add on over time. The checklist below goes from the most basic to the most complete. Use this list to choose the things that best meet your own needs.

### Your Grab Bag

It is important to have a Grab Bag ready to go in case you ever need to leave your home quickly in an emergency. Your Grab Bag should include:

- One day's clothing and shoes for each family member
- Personal care products (for example: toothbrush, feminine hygiene products, diapers)
- Towel
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Granola bars/trail mix
- Extra set of car keys
- Cash
- Prepaid phone card
- Copies of important documents: medical and prescription information, passports, birth certificates, drivers license, insurance papers, bank account information ...

**If you have to leave your home quickly, don't forget your prescription medications, eyeglasses and/or hearing aids.**

### Your Car

If you have a car, keep your gas tank filled above halfway. In an emergency you may not be able to get fuel. Other items to have in your car include:

- Bottled water
- Food (granola/energy bars)
- First aid kit
- White distress flag
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Flares/light sticks
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Emergency reflective blanket
- Jumper cables
- Tire jack and spare tire
- Fix-a-flat
- Shovel
- Maps

**Think about keeping your Grab Bag in the trunk of your car. You'll be ready to go quickly and will have what you need if you are stuck on the road.**

### Your In-Home Kit

To be MORE prepared, add supplies to last 7–10 days. How can you build your 7- to 10-day supply? Buy a few extra supplies each month until you have enough to last for at least 7 extra days. Buy foods that need no refrigeration and little or no cooking. Try:

- Water: at least 1 gallon, per person, per day
- Canned or dried fruits, vegetables and soups
- Canned or dried meat and seafood
- Beverages: instant coffee, canned juice
- Rice, pasta, cereal, crackers
- Powdered or canned milk
- Baby food and formula
- Comfort foods; snacks, sweets
- Other foods: peanut butter, cooking oil, salt, nuts

#### Other needed items:

- Personal care products (for example: feminine hygiene products, diapers)

#### Pet needs:

- Food, water and medications

**Store supplies in a dry, cool place. Use supplies before they expire and replace what you use.**

ow gives ideas on what might go into a kit from

## Your Home

In an emergency, having these few items in your home can help keep your family safe.

- Water: at least 1 gallon, per person, per day
- Can opener (non-electric)
- Battery powered radio
- ABC-type fire extinguisher
- Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors
- Prescription medications
- Wired telephone (not cordless)
- First aid kit
- Flashlight & battery powered lantern
- 3-day supply of canned or dried foods
- 3-day supply of baby food and formula

**If you lose power, eat the food in your refrigerator first. Without power, a refrigerator should keep food at a safe temperature for about four hours. If the power is off longer than that, use your emergency food supply.**

## Extra Supplies to Have at Home

In order to be MOST prepared, keep these things at home:

- Outdoor grill and fuel
- Fire escape ladder
- Rope and duct tape
- Extra batteries

**Never use items such as grills, camp stoves, or generators indoors. They create carbon monoxide, a deadly gas that cannot be seen or smelled.**

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION	FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
Allergies: _____	Family Emergency Contact: _____
Blood Type: _____	Phone: _____
Medical Conditions: _____	Out-of-State Contact: _____
Current Medications: _____	Phone: _____
Health Care Provider: _____	Neighborhood Mtg Place: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Other: _____	Alternate Mtg Place: _____
	Phone: _____

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Dial 911 in Emergencies!

## Step 2: Make a Family Communications Plan

If you are separated and cannot get in touch with your family, each family member should call the same contact out-of-state. Fill out the card above and give copies to all family members to keep with them. Identify:

- An emergency contact in your local area
- A contact out-of-state in case the emergency affects your local contact
- A neighborhood meeting place

## Step 3: Make a Family Evacuation Plan

In an emergency, you may need to leave your home quickly. If you think you might need to evacuate, listen to the radio for more information. Make sure everyone knows:

- The best exits out of your home
- A neighborhood meeting place
- Local radio station
- Location of: Grab Bag, fire extinguisher and first-aid kit
- A plan for pets in case you need to evacuate

## Step 4: Make a Plan for People with In-Home Care Needs

If someone needs special assistance in an emergency:

- Tell your local fire department about their special needs
- Identify a neighbor or family member who can help if a care provider cannot get to them
- Talk with a care provider about what should be done in an emergency
- Consider helping neighbors who may have special needs





## **PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY: THE SMART THING TO DO**



### **Twice each year**

When you change your clocks you should also:

- Check the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Check the pressure gauge on your fire extinguishers
- Practice getting out of your home quickly with your family
- Update your Grab Bag
- Use and replace any food in your kit that will expire soon

### **To help prevent the spread of disease and illness:**

- Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing or sneeze into your elbow
- Wash hands often, especially when handling food, and after coughing, sneezing or using the bathroom
- Stay home when you are sick

### **Safe drinking water in an emergency**

If your water comes from a city or town system, obey "boil water" orders from officials. Heat water to a rolling boil for 2 minutes. Do not use water from a well that has been submersed in flood water. Check with officials about testing for well water contamination. Never use flood water for any purpose because it could be contaminated.

This brochure was designed and produced by the Community Health Institute in cooperation with New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Department of Safety, and Capital Area Public Health Network. For more information about emergency preparedness, visit the following websites:

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

[www.nhoem.state.nh.us](http://www.nhoem.state.nh.us)

[www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov)