



Disaster Planning - Basics

Communities throughout the Pacific Northwest are subject to many types of disasters. While we hope that such occurrences never happen it has been shown time and time again that being prepared for disasters is prudent.

What Disasters can affect you?

- Ask what types of disaster are most likely to happen in your area.
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them. Also, learn which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.
- Ask about animal care.
- Find out how to help the elderly or disabled persons in your neighborhood.
- Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or childcare center and other places your family frequently visits.

Create a Disaster Plan:

- Meet with your family and discuss why you need to be prepared for disasters. Plan to share the responsibilities and work together as a team.
- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan to take care of your pets.
- Ask an out-of-area friend or relative to be your "contact". It's often easier to call long distance following a disaster.
- Pick two places to meet:
 - Right outside your home in case of fire.
 - Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.

Put your Plan into Action:

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local emergency medical services number for emergency help. Show them how your cell phone works.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches.
- Check for adequate insurance coverage.
- Install an ABC fire extinguisher in your home, teach each family member to use it, and where it is kept.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of your home, in appropriate areas.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble disaster supply kits.
- Take a first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find a safe spot in your home for each type of disaster.

Practice and Maintain Your Plan:

- Review your plans every six months so everyone remembers what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguishers according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors every month, replace batteries every six months.
- Replace stored water and food every six months.

HINT: You change your clocks in the spring & fall. This is a great time to review your plans, practice your drills, change the batteries in your detectors, and replace food and water.

It is important to evaluate your location, family needs, and proximity to stores.

This will help you determine what supplies you will need to stockpile to help you make it through the next disaster.



WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT
Emergency Management Division
Camp Murray, WA 98430-5122

Web site: www.mil.wa.gov/emergency-management-division
253-512-7000; (800) 562-6108