



Home

DEVELOP A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

If you're like most people, you spend more time planning your summer vacation than you do thinking about a family emergency plan. Fortunately, a few minutes spent now (and during your next trips to the grocery and hardware store) can pay huge dividends if your family faces the unexpected.

These tips come from the National Fire Protection Association, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Red Cross:

EMERGENCIES INSIDE YOUR HOME

If your home caught fire tonight, would every family member know how to get out safely? Make sure with a plan, and hold family fire drills every six months.

- Find **two escape routes** from every room, especially bedrooms. Teach kids always to sleep with the bedroom door closed (fire takes 10-15 minutes to burn through a wooden door, buying extra time to escape) and never open a door if it feels hot.
- Make sure **windows can be opened quickly** and that there's a roof or drop-down fire ladder to climb onto.
- Teach family members to **escape a smoky room by crawling**. The air is clearer near the floor.
- If you live in a high-rise, **take the stairs** – not the elevator – to escape.
- If your clothes catch on fire, don't run. **Stop** where you are. **Drop** to the ground. **Roll** until you smother the flames.
- Set a **safe meeting place** outside (like the mailbox or a streetlight) so you can account for all family members. Tell everyone **NEVER to go back** inside a burning home.
- Make sure even the youngest family members know to **dial 9-1-1**.

(continued)

PEMCO MUTUAL INSURANCE CO.
325 EASTLAKE AVENUE EAST
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98109

1-800-GO-PEMCO
(1-800-467-3626)
pemco.com



NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

The Northwest is no stranger to windstorms, floods, earthquakes, man-made calamities like chemical spills, and even [volcanic eruptions](#). Make sure your family could cope on its own for a few days without basic services like water, gas, and electricity.

- Choose a **meeting spot outside your neighborhood** where family members can gather in case they can't return home. Everyone should know the location's phone number and address.
- Ask an **out-of-state friend to be your "family contact."** Because of jammed phone circuits, it's often easier to call long distance after a disaster than it is to call locally. This person would act as a go-between so far-flung family members can leave messages for each other.
- Teach family members how and when to **shut off utilities** like water, gas, and electricity. They also should know where to find and how to use a **fire extinguisher**.
- Put together an **emergency kit** with supplies for all family members and pets.

TOP 10 THINGS TO KEEP IN YOUR EMERGENCY KIT

In backpacks and plastic bins stored near a doorway (think hallway coat closet or utility room), pack these essentials, which you could stuff in your car at a moment's notice:

1. **Three days' worth of food and water.** One gallon of water per person, per day (for drinking and basic sanitation). Choose easy-to-prepare foods like canned soups, tuna, and juice; granola bars; instant noodles; and peanut butter. Rotate with food from your pantry so your stash doesn't get stale. Include food for your pets, too.
2. **Medicine.** One week's supply of all your family's prescription and non-prescription medications (rotate these). Include hygiene supplies, too.
3. **Cash.** ATMs get drained quickly in emergencies and, without electricity, neither they nor your credit or debit cards will work.
4. **Flashlight.** One for each family member, plus extra batteries. Make sure one is the type that you crank to recharge.
5. **Blankets or sleeping bags.** Critical if you must sleep in your car or at an emergency shelter.
6. **Sturdy shoes, rain poncho, and a change of clothes** for each family member. Include leashes for pets.
7. **Basic first-aid kit.** Include bandages and antibiotic ointment, tweezers, aspirin, antacid, and antihistamine.
8. **Photocopies of important papers** like insurance policies, driver's licenses, birth certificates, and contact numbers for relatives.
9. **Cell phone and charger** or prepaid phone cards.
10. **Toilet paper, duct tape, and baby wipes.** You'll be glad you brought those!