

1.1 *Introduction*

By taking some simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies, SRPET suggests individuals do three key things: develop a Family Emergency Plan, prepare a Family Emergency Supply and First Aid Kit and be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate response.

Meet with your family and discuss the importance of preparing for an emergency. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes. Discuss special considerations necessary for children, elderly individuals and persons with special needs in your immediate area. A Family Emergency Plan should designate shared responsibilities and stress the importance of working together as a team.

In addition to developing a plan for your immediate family, SRPET suggests neighborhood members develop a communication network to inform residents of an emergency situation. Communication can often be the key to saving lives and property.

In the event of threat to life or property, Riverside County Fire/OES (or Riverside County Fire, Riverside County Sheriff or Riverside County Community Health Agency) will initiate the **Early Warning Notification System (EWNS)** – a system that uses the telephone system to alert residents and businesses that are affected, threatened or might be endangered by an emergency event or disaster (see Section 5 for more details).



SRPET encourages all residents to take part in a locally sponsored **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** training. You can contact Riverside County Fire/OES at 951-955-4700 for a schedule of CERT training offered free of charge. For CERT scheduled classes, visit www.rvcfire.org and go to Functions/OES/CERT. The FEMA web site, <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/newsletter.shtm> also has information regarding this program.

CERT was implemented to educate people about disaster preparedness related to hazards that may impact their area and trains individuals in basic disaster response skills such as: fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

1.2 *Developing a Family Emergency Plan Checklist*

Since an emergency can occur at any time make sure you have a Family Emergency Plan to reduce fear, anxiety and losses. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance: how you will contact one another; how you will get back together and what you will do in different situations. A Family Emergency Plan should be reviewed every six months and updated as needed.

- Draw a floor plan of your residence and mark two escape routes
- Identify safe spots in your home for each type of disaster
- Establish two meeting places to (re)unite (in case shelters are not open). Select one close to your home and one outside your neighborhood in case you can not return home after a disaster
- Be familiar with at least two exit routes from your neighborhood and possible areas of safe refuge
- Create a list of emergency numbers and post it close to your main telephone.
- Instruct household members to turn on a battery-powered radio for emergency information
- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area)
- The following web site address will provide updated information on major incidents where Riverside County Fire responds. Keep this as a shortcut on your computer for easy access, www.rvcfire.org. Click on the tab labeled "Incident Info" and locate the area (city) where the event has occurred and click on the incident number for details on that event
- Teach children how and when to call 911
- Store your family records in a waterproof and fireproof container, on a flash drive, on a CD or keep in a safety deposit box
- Identify important papers you will need if evacuation is necessary and make copies now (personal identification, insurance policies, medical records, school records, birth certificates, social security cards, passports, bank and credit card numbers, etc.)
- Have Adult family members take First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) class
- Attend a **CERT** class. Visit <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/> for additional information or call Riverside County Fire/OES at 951-955-4700 for a schedule of CERT classes
- Practice fire drills regularly at home, using a smoke detector signal to initiate the drill
- Network with your neighbors so you can assist each other in time of need
- Identify those in your immediate area with special needs
- Look for any safety issues that you can address now to make your home safer
- Prepare a Family Emergency Supply Kit, a First Aid Kit and a Go-Bag (for each family member and pet – see section 2.3 and 3.1.1)
- Learn the emergency plan at your children's school and make sure the school has any updated contact information
- Teach your children what to do in an emergency and make sure they know their name and address, as well as the full name and contact information for each parent

NOTE: Make a list of irreplaceable personal items (family memorabilia) to be taken in case of evacuation

1.3 ***Family Emergency Supply Kit***

You may need to survive on your own after a disaster. This means having your own food, water and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for five days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they can not reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours or it might take days.

Basic services such as electricity, gas, water, septic system and telephones may be unavailable for days or longer. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. A Family Emergency Supply Kit is a collection of basic items that may be needed in the event of a disaster.

Keep your Family Emergency Supply Kit in a designated place and have it ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. Make sure all family members know where the kit is kept.

Following is a checklist of suggested items for a Family Emergency Supply Kit:

- Five-day supply of water (see section 2.3.1)
- Five-day supply of non-perishable food for family and pets (see section 3.1.1)
- Radio or television (battery powered with extra batteries)
- Clock or watch (battery powered with extra batteries)
- Cell Phone and charger (make a note to grab these when evacuating)
- Fire extinguisher
- Safety glasses
- Flashlight / headlamp (with extra batteries)
- Leather / work gloves
- Whistle
- Signal flares
- Matches in waterproof container
- Vehicle Power Inverter
- Compass
- Nitrile gloves (non-latex)
- Dura Mask N95
- Wrench and / or pliers
- Utility shears
- 4 in 1 Emergency tool
- Pry bar
- Duct tape and scissors
- Plastic sheeting (2-4 mils)
- Pad / pen / marker
- Local maps
- Water Purification tablets and / or household bleach with medicine dropper
Note: Dilute 10 parts water to 1 part household bleach - Household bleach can be used as a disinfectant - Do not use scented, color safe or household bleaches with added cleaners
- Blankets, sleeping bags and pillows
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Disposable wipes, washcloth, towel and hand sanitizer
- Heavy-duty garbage bags
- Toilet paper
- Feminine napkins
- Extra set of house and car keys
- Manual can opener
- Paper / plastic cups, eating utensils and plates
- All-purpose knife
- Aluminum foil / plastic storage bags
- Items for infants, such as diapers and pacifiers

1.3.1 Family Emergency Water Supply

We often take our household water supply for granted. When safe drinking water is unavailable, it is more than just an inconvenience; it can become a health emergency. Disasters often interrupt the supply of safe drinking water. Interruptions may be for only a short period of time or days. Every Family Emergency Supply Kit should include enough water to meet its family members' needs.

Having an ample supply of water is a top priority in an emergency. Everyone's needs differ depending upon age, physical condition, activity, diet and climate. Most people need to drink at

least eight cups of water each day. In hot environments, water needs could be double. The amount of water you need will also depend on the total amount of juices, soups, other drinks and high moisture foods that are available. Allow more for children, nursing women and for those who are ailing. Additional water will be needed for food preparation and hygiene. In general, store at least **one gallon of water per person / per day**. If you have pets, **allow 1 quart per day for each small pet. For large animals, see Section 3 for details.**

Storing a five-day supply is recommended but consider maintaining a two-week supply if space is available.

Emergency Purification of Drinking Water

Use only water that has been properly disinfected for drinking, cooking, making any prepared drink or food or for brushing teeth.

- Use bottled water that has not been exposed to flood waters or contamination
- If you don't have bottled water, use one of the following methods to purify water to make it safe:
 1. Boil the water for 10 minutes, let it cool and store in clean containers with covers (Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms that may be present)
 2. If you can not boil water, you can disinfect it using unscented household bleach (Household bleach will kill some, but not all, types of disease-causing organisms that may be in the water)
 3. If the water is cloudy, filter it through clean cloths or allow it to settle and draw off the clear water for disinfection; then add 1/8 teaspoon (or 8 drops) of regular unscented liquid household bleach for each gallon of water, stir it well and let it stand for 30 minutes before using
- If you have a well that has been flooded, the water should be tested and purified after flood waters recede
- If you suspect that your well may be contaminated, contact your local or state health department or agriculture extension agent for specific advice

1.3.2 Information About Disinfection

In times of crisis, follow advice from local officials. Local health departments or public water systems may urge consumers to use more caution or to follow additional measures than the information provided here.

Look for other sources of potable water in and around your home.

When your home water supply is interrupted by natural or other forms of disaster, you can obtain limited amounts of water by draining your hot water tank or melting ice cubes. In most cases, well water is the preferred source of drinking water. If it is not available and river or lake water must be used, avoid sources containing floating material and water with a dark color or an odor. Generally, flowing water is better quality than stagnant water.

Examine the physical condition of the water.

When emergency disinfection is necessary, disinfectants are less effective in cloudy, murky or colored water. Filter murky or colored water through clean cloths or allow it to settle. It is better to both settle **and** filter. After filtering until it is clear, or allowing all dirt and other particles to settle, draw off the clean and clear water for disinfection. Water prepared for disinfection should be stored only in clean, tightly covered, containers, not subject to corrosion.

1.3.2.1 Chemical Treatment

When boiling is not practical, certain chemicals will kill most harmful or disease-causing organisms. For chemical disinfection to be effective, the water must be filtered and settled first. Chlorine and iodine are the two chemicals commonly used to treat water. They are somewhat effective in protecting against exposure to *Giardia*, but may not be effective in controlling more resistant organisms like *Cryptosporidium*. Chlorine is generally more effective than iodine in controlling *Giardia*, and both disinfectants work much better in warm water.

You can use unscented, household bleach that contains a chlorine compound to disinfect water. Do not use non-chlorine bleach to disinfect water. Typically, household chlorine bleaches will be 5.25% available chlorine. Follow the procedure written on the label. When the necessary procedure is not given, find the percentage of available chlorine on the label and use the information in the following table as a guide (Remember, 1/8 teaspoon and 8 drops are about the same quantity).

| Available Chlorine | Drops per Quart/Gallon of Clear Water | Drops per Liter of Clear Water |
|--------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1% | 10 per Quart - 40 per Gallon | 10 per Liter |
| 4-6% | 2 per Quart - 8 per Gallon (1/8 teaspoon) | 2 per Liter |
| 7-10% | 1 per Quart - 4 per Gallon | 1 per Liter |

Remember that purification is done for drinking water and disinfection is used for cleaning water.

For additional information, please visit <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/faq/emerg.html>

1.3.3 Family Emergency Food Supply

You may need to survive on your own after a disaster. In addition to an adequate water supply this means having your own food and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for five days. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. Remember, you could get help in hours, or it might take days.

Basic services such as electricity, gas, water, septic system and telephone service may be unavailable for days or longer. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. Plan your Family Emergency Food Supply according to your family's size.

The following are things to consider when putting together a Family Emergency Food Supply:

- Avoid foods that will make you thirsty
 - Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content
- Stock canned foods, dry mixes and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water or special preparation
 - Be sure to include a manual can opener in your Family Emergency Supply Kit
- Include any special dietary needs
- Items for infants, such as formula and bottles

1.3.4 Maintaining Your Family Emergency Supply Kit

Just as important as putting your supplies together is maintaining them so they are safe to use when they are needed. Here are some tips to keep your supplies ready and in good condition:

- Keep canned foods in a dry place where the temperature is cool
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers to protect from insects and to extend shelf life
- Throw out any canned goods that become swollen, dented or corroded
- Use foods before they go bad and replace them with fresh supplies
- Place the new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in the front
- Change stored food and water supplies every six months.
 - Be sure to write the storage date on all containers
- Re-think your needs every year and update your Family Emergency Supply Kit as your family's needs change
- Keep items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as an unused trashcan, camping backpack or duffel bag

1.3.5 Family Emergency Go-Bags

A Go-Bag is a pre-packed duffle bag or backpack kept in an easily accessible location or in your vehicle. Family members should have their own Go-Bag filled with their personal needed items.

Following is a checklist of suggested items for an Adult Go-Bag and a Child Go-Bag:

Adult Go-Bag

- Include a list of important medical information such as serious health conditions, allergies and current medications
- Complete change of clothes
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Extra socks
- Lightweight / all weather jacket / sweatshirt
- Rain gear / poncho
- Hat and gloves
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight w / extra batteries
- Small bills / loose change
- Flash drive with important documents
- Shampoo, comb and brush
- Deodorants, sunscreen
- Razor, shaving cream
- Toothpaste and toothbrush
- Special needs items such as: eye glasses, contact lenses and solution, hearing aid and batteries, etc.
- Lip balm
- Mirror
- Copies (paper or electronic) of the following:
 - Family birth certificates
 - Marriage /divorce papers
 - Driver's license
 - Social Security card
 - Passport
 - Will
 - Deed
 - Household Inventory (Photos or video of each room in your home)

- Insurance papers
- Bank and credit card account numbers
- Stocks and bonds
- Mortgage / rental papers
- Medical records
- School records

Child Go-Bag

- Include a list of important medical information such as serious health conditions, allergies and current medications
- Complete change of clothes
- Sturdy shoes / sneakers
- Extra socks
- Jacket / sweatshirt
- Rain gear / poncho
- Hat and gloves
- Toothpaste and toothbrush
- Books / cards / doll / stuffed animal / toys
- Make ID card (with photo) of your child and attach to child's Go-Bag.
- Items for infants: formula, powered milk, medications, diapers, bottles, diaper rash ointment and pacifiers

1.3.6 Family Emergency First Aid Kit

In any emergency or disaster, injuries are likely to occur. If you have the basic First Aid supplies you will be better prepared to help your loved ones if they are hurt. Remember, many injuries are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical attention, but having a well stocked First Aid Kit and knowing how to treat minor injuries can make a difference in an emergency. SRPET suggests all adult family members consider taking a First Aid class.

- Information on First Aid can be found in your local phone book or by contacting the American Red Cross
- In the case where injuries are severe and movement could cause further injuries, **do not move** the injured person unless it is a life-threatening situation
 - Make the injured person (s) as comfortable as possible and wait for emergency personnel
- Have a First Aid Kit well stocked and store the kit in an easy-to-carry and easy-to-grab container
 - Make sure all family members know exactly where the kit is stored

Following is a list of suggested items for a Family Emergency First Aid Kit:

- First Aid manual
- Sterile adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- Sterile dressings (2 and 4-inch sterile gauze pads, 4-6 of each)
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangle bandages (3)
- 2 and 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls each)
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Needle for splinter removal

- Moistened hand wipes / alcohol wipes
- Antibiotic ointment to prevent infection
- Burn ointment to prevent infection
- Antiseptic
- Eye wash solution to flush eyes or as general decontaminant
- Medical supplies (thermometer, glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment)
- Petroleum jelly
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent: soap and antibiotic hand wipes to disinfect.
- Nitrile gloves (non-latex -2 pairs)
- Aspirin and non-aspirin pain reliever
- Antacid for upset stomach
- Laxative / anti-diarrhea medicine
- Activated charcoal (use only if advised by the Poison Control Center)

1.3.7 Family Emergency Evacuation Plan

Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action. Prepare your family to evacuate if required.

- Stay tuned and listen to your (battery-powered) radio or television for news and instructions
- Confine or secure your pet(s)
- Gather Family Emergency Supply Kit and Go Bags
- Prepare you vehicle for possible evacuation (back vehicle into driveway, close windows, with keys in ignition)
- Notify your out-of-state and any family members of the disaster (Remember, it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area.)
- Network with your neighbors so can assist each other in time of need
- If possible, check those with special needs in your immediate area
- Evacuate if advised to do so (If evacuation is required, law enforcement will advise residents of the safest evacuation route to use and what shelter to go to for you and your pet)

1.3.8 When Disaster Strikes

- If you are remaining in your home, check for gas leaks starting at the hot water heater
 - If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the gas valve, open windows and get everyone outside quickly
- Shut off any other damaged utilities
- Clean up spilled items immediately (household bleaches, gasoline and any other flammable liquids)
- If possible, check on your neighbors, especially the elderly or disabled persons
- Evacuate if advised to do so (Secure transportation and coordinate evacuation efforts of community residents who are unable to transport themselves)

1.3.9 Returning Home

Remain calm and patient. Officials will determine when it is safe for you to return to your home. This will be done as soon as possible considering safety and accessibility.

- Check for damage to your home
 - Use a flashlight only
- **Do not light matches or turn electrical switches on** if you suspect damage
- Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards
 - For several hours after a fire, maintain a "fire watch" and check for smoke or sparks throughout the house

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards
- Walk carefully around the outside of your home and check for gas leaks and structural damage
 - If you have any doubts about safety, do not enter your home until it is inspected by a qualified professional
- Do not enter if the authorities have red tagged your home
- Enter the home carefully and check for damage
- Be aware of loose boards and slippery floors
- Check the roof, foundation, and chimney for cracks
 - If the building appears unsafe, leave immediately
- If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open doors and windows and leave immediately
 - Turn off the main gas valve from the outside, if you can
 - Call the gas vendor from a neighbor's residence
 - If you shut off the gas supply at the main valve, you will need a professional to turn it back on
 - Do not smoke or use oil, gas lanterns, candles or torches for lighting inside a damaged home until you are sure there is no leaking gas or other flammable materials present
- Check the electrical system
 - If necessary, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker
 - If the situation is unsafe, leave the structure and call for help
 - Do not turn on the lights until you are sure they are safe to use
 - You may want to have an electrician inspect your wiring
- If appliances are wet, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker
 - Then, unplug appliances and let them dry out
 - Have appliances checked by a professional before using them
 - Also, have the electrical system checked by an electrician before turning the power back on
- Check the water and septic systems
 - If pipes are damaged, turn off the main water valve
 - Check with local authorities before using any water; the water could be contaminated
 - Pump out wells and have the water tested by authorities before drinking
 - Do not flush toilets until you know that septic lines are intact
- Throw out all food and other supplies that you suspect might be contaminated
- Be alert for objects that may fall when opening cabinets
- Clean up household chemical spills
 - Disinfect items that may be contaminated by raw sewage, bacteria or chemicals
 - Clean salvageable items
- Take pictures of damages and contact your insurance agent
 - Keep good records of repair and cleaning costs
- Contact your local disaster relief service such as the American Red Cross or Salvation Army to help with any immediate needs such as: temporary housing, medicine, eyeglasses, clothing or other essential items