

Developed by:



# FEMA

*Office of National Capital  
Region Coordination*

In consultation with:





# Emergency Preparedness for Federal Employees in the National Capital Region

March 2012



FEMA

# *Contents*

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 3  | FROM THE DIRECTOR  |
| 6  | BE INFORMED  |
| 6  | Emergency Alerts   |
| 8  | Emergencies at Work                                      |
| 9  | Sheltering in Place                                      |
| 10 | Building Evacuation                                      |
| 12 | Guidance for Specific Hazards                            |
| 14 | Evacuating vs. Staying Put                               |
| 15 | Evacuation Routes for the District of Columbia           |
| 17 | Public Transportation                                    |
| 17 | Operating Status of the Federal Government               |
| 18 | Telework and Human Resources                             |
| 19 | MAKE A PLAN  |
| 20 | Family Communications Plan                               |
| 20 | Schools, Daycare, and Assisted Living Centers            |
| 20 | Pets   |
| 21 | Individuals with Disabilities or Access/Functional Needs |
| 22 | BUILD A KIT  |
| 22 | At Home  |
| 23 | At Work  |
| 24 | In Your Car  |
| 24 | Maintaining Your Kits                                    |
| 24 | Starter Kits   |
| 25 | GET INVOLVED   |
| 26 | RESOURCES  |
| 27 | PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST                                   |



# FEMA

## *Office of National Capital Region Coordination*

As federal employees, we all have a range of responsibilities: to our families, loved ones, communities, and the American public. By preparing for emergencies, we can enhance the safety of our families and strengthen our ability to carry out our work.

This guide was produced by the FEMA Office of National Capital Region Coordination to encourage both federal employees and the whole community in the Washington, D.C. area to take practical steps to better prepare ourselves and our families for emergencies that could threaten our homes, workplaces, and communities.

We all have a role to play in serving our nation and keeping ourselves and our families safe. The better prepared we are, the less the impact of a disaster, and the more first responders will be able to focus their efforts on those who need help most. I encourage each of you to review this guide and then take these important steps so you and your family will be better prepared for an emergency or unexpected crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steward D. Beckham".

Steward D. Beckham  
Director  
Office of National Capital Region Coordination  
Federal Emergency Management Agency



**Each day, you and other federal employees provide an array of essential services. Your own personal readiness for natural, accidental, or intentional threats is a key part of the Federal Government's ability to continue serving its citizens.**

**Disasters can happen at any time, without warning. Federal, state, local, and non-governmental agencies are committed to helping people in need, but during a disaster that assistance may be delayed. You and your family should be ready for the unexpected and prepared to provide for yourselves.**



**During an emergency, you may have little or no time to plan what to do next, so you and your family need to be prepared. Fortunately, there are practical steps you can take now that can make a big difference in a wide range of emergencies:**

**BE INFORMED**

**MAKE A PLAN**

**BUILD A KIT**

**GET INVOLVED**



## *Be Informed*

[www.ready.gov/be-informed](http://www.ready.gov/be-informed)

*Knowing what to do before, during, and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared, and it may make all the difference when seconds count.*

Be sure you know how to obtain emergency alerts and other critical information.

Methods of getting emergency information vary within the National Capital Region; these include local radio and television, text message alerts, and NOAA Weather Radio messages. In some cases, you might hear a special siren, get a telephone call, or

emergency workers may go door-to-door.

Contact your city or county office of emergency management or your local chapter of the American Red Cross for more information. (See page 26 for contact information.)

***Emergency Text Alerts***  
[www.capitalert.gov](http://www.capitalert.gov)

The local governments in the National Capital Region maintain websites that allow you to register email addresses, cell phones, and pagers to receive emergency text alerts.

**Sign up for emergency alerts** from the local communities where

you work and where you live, and encourage the rest of your family to sign up, too. Be sure to register an email address or cell phone number that you check during the workday.

- Visit [www.capitalert.gov](http://www.capitalert.gov) for links to the local government alert systems in the NCR.
- Check with schools, daycare facilities, and assisted living centers you visit or use to see if they offer an emergency alert system.
- Public transportation providers also offer alerts on closures and delays. See page 26 for links to additional resources.
- Get information from social media resources including Twitter and Facebook.
- Find alternative ways to inform family members who do not have access to electronic devices.

### ***NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards***

***[www.weather.gov/nwr](http://www.weather.gov/nwr)  
Frequency 162.450 WNG736***

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information and other emergency alerts directly from the nearest

National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts, and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NWR also broadcasts warning for all types of hazards, including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as AMBER alerts or 911 telephone outages).

### ***Capital Region Updates [www.capitalregionupdates.gov](http://www.capitalregionupdates.gov)***

The jurisdictions of the National Capital Region have developed a new web portal to communicate emergency information to residents.

Through this online resource, residents can stay connected to local jurisdictional news (through a combined RSS feed of local news releases), local weather from the National Weather Service, traffic and transit alerts, tips on how to prepare for emergencies, and more.

During a regional emergency or major weather event across the National Capital Region, the site will feature incident updates and life-safety news and instructions. It will serve as an online “one stop shop” for information and guidance.



## *Emergencies at Work*

Talk with your manager and coworkers to learn about and plan for situations that could arise at work, from a medical emergency in the office to a major event in the region. In most cases, your Occupant Emergency Plan will provide guidance on the standard procedures in your building.

### *Occupant Emergency Plan*

Federal agencies that operate in buildings managed by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) are required to maintain an Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP). The OEP is a short-term emergency response program that establishes procedures for safeguarding lives and property.

Familiarize yourself with the plans and procedures in place at your agency, including the notification methods your agency uses to issue emergency alerts and keep employees informed. Your agency may use an automated emergency notification system, or there may be distinct alarm sounds or announcements to notify building occupants to evacuate or shelter in place. Ask your manager for more information about the procedures at your specific work site.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their employees are informed of workplace emergency procedures, and they play a critical role in accounting for employees during drills and actual

events.

### ***Role of the Occupant Emergency Team***

Many buildings have designated Floor Monitors and other members of an Occupant Emergency Team who will assist employees during an emergency. Prior to an emergency, know who they are and how to recognize them.

If your building has designated assembly areas, learn where they are and how to get to the location.

### ***Protective Actions***

Most responses to building emergencies are variations on one of two basic protective actions. In most emergencies, depending on the situation, it either will be safer to **evacuate** (leave the building) or **shelter in place** (remain inside).

During most emergencies, your default action should be to stay in your office until you receive more information or instructions to evacuate. However, if the fire alarm activates follow your building's emergency procedures.

If you are specifically told to evacuate, shelter in place, or seek medical treatment, do so immediately. **If you are not in immediate danger, stay safe where you are and get more information.**

### ***Sheltering In Place***

In some emergencies, evacuating immediately may not be the best course of action. Many emergencies, such as severe weather, the release of a hazardous material outside the building, or the threat of a chemical, biological, or radiological attack, may require the opposite of evacuation: to remain inside in an attempt to avoid exposure to dangerous conditions outside. "Sheltering in place," which means staying inside your building or going to a designated safe area, may be the best way to avoid harm.

#### **If shelter in place orders are issued:**

- **Move promptly to the designated safe area** in your building, closing office doors behind you.
- **Grab your emergency preparedness kit** and other personal belongings (like your keys, purse, medication, etc.) if they are readily available, but do not return to the office to get them.
- **Alert others** to the emergency, and ask if they need help.
- **Await further guidance** from building management, security personnel, or the Occupant Emergency Team.

Your workplace should have specific places identified as shelter in place locations, such as interior halls, conference rooms, offices, or storage rooms. Be sure you know at least two such locations in advance.

Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to maintain a barrier between yourself and any dangerous conditions outside. For example, for a chemical release, this could mean sealing doors and windows; for severe weather, this could mean moving to a lower floor or interior part of the building, away from glass and flying debris.

Generally, you will only be asked to shelter in place at the office until the **threat can be assessed, emergency response personnel arrive, and the dangerous conditions pass.**

Sheltering in place is intended as a short-term protective action, usually only for a few hours. However, it may take authorities some time to provide information on what is happening, so remain calm and be patient.

Even if it appears there is no longer a hazard, continue to shelter in place until an “all clear” is issued by building management

or security personnel.

### ***Building Evacuation***

If you need to evacuate your building, follow the procedures in your Occupant Emergency Plan and the directions from your Occupant Emergency Team. When the alarm sounds or evacuation notice is given:

- **Lock your computer terminal** and quickly secure your work materials.
- **Take personal possessions** (such as keys, purse, or wallet) with you, but do not return to the office to get them.
- **Leave without delay.** Walk, don't run.
- **Alert others to the emergency,** and ask if they need help. Account for any visitors and guide them out.
- **Follow the nearest safe exit route.** If it is obstructed or filled with smoke, use an alternate route.
- **Stay to the right** in stairwells so emergency personnel can ascend the stairs as you are evacuating. Do not use elevators unless instructed to do so by emergency personnel.
- **Go to your emergency**

**assembly point**, and check in with your supervisor or other designated emergency personnel.

Make sure you know two evacuation routes from your work station and your designated assembly area.

### ***See Something, Say Something***

If you see something suspicious, say something to security personnel or local law enforcement. Keen awareness of your surroundings could prevent an incident from occurring or give responders valuable information during an emergency. Make sure the emergency numbers for law enforcement or security personnel are posted next to your phone at work and programmed into your cell phone.



### ***Fire and Emergency Medical Services***

Your building may have specific procedures for calling the fire department or emergency medical services beyond simply calling 9-1-1. A large campus or secure

building may have procedures where security personnel escort emergency responders. If your building has a nurse or medical staff, know how to call for their assistance. Learn the location of emergency supplies, such as fire extinguishers, alarm pull stations, automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and first aid kits.

### ***Access or Functional Needs***

If you or any of your coworkers have a disability or other access or functional needs, take special steps to prepare. During an evacuation, there may be designated assembly areas for personnel who cannot evacuate down stairs. Check on procedures available to alert emergency personnel that someone needs evacuation assistance, and make sure they can access your designated shelter-in-place locations.

Employees who need assistance evacuating, relocating, or moving to assembly areas should consider notifying the Occupant Emergency Team or building management prior to an emergency.

# ***Guidance for Specific Hazards***

*This is a list of general protocols for several emergencies.*

*For more information on what to do before, during and after emergencies visit [www.ready.gov/be-informed](http://www.ready.gov/be-informed). In the event of an emergency follow the directions given by your building security or other public safety officials.*

## ***Bomb Threat (via telephone)***

- Write down exact wording of threat
- If available, follow the directions on your “bomb threat” reference card
- Immediately notify building security
- Follow instructions from building management and/or security

## ***Chemical Release Outside***

- Take shelter inside immediately (many chemicals are colorless and odorless).
- If you were directly exposed to chemicals, remove and discard clothing.
- Remain sheltered until additional information is available.
- Follow guidance from officials on seeking medical treatment. If you do not believe you have been exposed, let first responders treat the critically injured first.

## ***Earthquake***

If you are inside:

- Drop to the floor and take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture.
- Hold on until the shaking stops.

If you are outside:

- Stay outside and away from buildings or structures that could collapse or generate falling debris.
- Do not re-enter the building until you are advised to.

## ***Medical Emergencies***

Your building may have specific procedures for contacting emergency services. Know how to:

- Call 9-1-1 and alert building security or other designated officials.
- Locate first aid supplies and the Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
- Identify who is trained in CPR and first aid.
- Provide emergency contact information to first responders.

## *Power Outage or Blackout*

- If possible, remain at your workplace. Do not leave unless you have a way to get home.
- Follow guidance from OPM or other designated officials for information on office closures.
- If traffic lights, trains, and other transit systems are without power, expect extended delays.

## *Severe Weather - Tornado*

- Take shelter immediately.
- Move to an interior room away from windows.
- If you are driving, do not attempt to outrun the tornado. Pull over and seek shelter.
- If you are outside and unable to take shelter inside a structure, lay down in a ditch or low area.

## *Severe Weather - Hurricane*

- Check the National Weather Service for storm advisories, watches, and warnings.
- Before you leave your office, take the items you will need to telework.
- Follow any evacuation orders that are issued. If you evacuate, do not return to the affected area until advised that it is safe to do so.

## *Severe Weather - Snow*

- Check the National Weather Service for storm advisories, watches, and warnings.
- Only drive if necessary. Allow for extra time, and make sure you have a full tank of gas.
- Keep blankets, a shovel, and emergency supplies in car in case you become stranded.

## *Nuclear or Radiological*

- Remember these three factors: time, distance, and shielding. Try to decrease the time you are exposed to radiation, increase your distance from the contaminated area, and increase the shielding between yourself and any radiation.
- Attempt to cover your body and exposed skin with any available materials.
- Take shelter in an interior room immediately.
- Discard contaminated clothing and shower as soon as possible.

## *Workplace Violence*

If there is an active shooter, options include:

- Evacuate the building, leave your belongings, and keep hands visible.
- Hide out of view and block entry to your hiding place.
- Take action as a last resort to attempt to incapacitate the shooter.



## *Evacuating vs. Staying Put*

*Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay where you are or evacuate the area. You should understand and plan for both possibilities.*

In many emergencies, your best initial action is to stay safe in your home or office building and wait for more information instead of trying to evacuate the area and then exposing yourself to dangers outside (or getting stuck in traffic).

Use common sense and available information to determine if there is an immediate danger. If you

have time, try to find official guidance before making your own decision. Watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the Internet often for emergency information or instructions from local officials.

### ***Evacuation Considerations***

During an emergency, federal agencies may close their facilities, but area-wide evacuation orders typically will come from the governor, mayor, or county official for the jurisdiction where the evacuation will take place.

If evacuation orders are issued for a wide area, normal transportation systems may be disrupted. Roads may be closed, transit options may

be limited, and traffic congestion may choke major evacuation routes from your location. To get evacuation instructions and determine the best route, tune into local media broadcasts, sign up for local email and text alerts, and visit the websites for transit agencies and your local office of emergency management. (See page 26 for contact information.)

***Designated Evacuation Routes for the District of Columbia***  
***www.72hours.dc.gov***

In the event of an emergency affecting the District, a portion of the city could be instructed to evacuate. The Government of the District of Columbia has developed specific evacuation routes for each area of the city.

Prior to an emergency, input your address and print a personalized evacuation map from the District of Columbia.

If an evacuation requires residents from Maryland and Virginia to leave the NCR, specific transportation and route information will be provided by emergency management officials. It is still important for Maryland and Virginia residents to prepare for an evacuation by designating a family meeting location outside of the NCR and having a family preparedness kit.

If an evacuation is ordered, pay close attention to what area of the NCR is being evacuated. Any evacuation will be difficult. **If you are not in harm's way, it may be better for you and others if you remain in place.**

In most situations, staying put would be the safest and best choice. Traffic caused by attempts to evacuate unnecessarily will delay first responders.

***Know Primary and Alternate Routes***

If you are notified that you need to evacuate the National Capital Region, the normal routes that you take to work may be blocked or unavailable. Regardless of whether you drive or take public transportation to work, you may need to take alternate routes or modes of transportation home.

If you normally drive to work, know alternate routes home, and be prepared to walk, take public transportation, or wait in traffic for an extended period of time.

If you normally use public transportation, learn several different routes, lines, and service providers. You may also need to plan for other options, such as walking or riding in a car with a coworker.



## ***Public Transportation***

If you use public transportation, plan alternate ways to get where you need to go in case the service you normally use is unavailable.

- Plan an alternate route from the next closest bus or rail line in case the station or line you normally use is unavailable. (For example, if you normally use the New Carrollton Metro station on the Orange Line, chart an alternate route from the Addison Road station on the Blue Line, or the Greenbelt station on the Green Line.)
- Learn your bus routes. If rail service is unavailable, a bus may get you where you need to go (but anticipate delays due to heavy traffic).
- If you ride Metro, visit [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com) or call (202) 637-7000 for service status or to plan a route home.
- To report an emergency, suspicious activity, or unattended packages in the Metro system, call Metro Transit Police at (202) 962-2121. If you ride Metro regularly, save this number in your cell phone.
- Think about alternative transportation such as biking, walking, or carpooling with coworkers.

Staying at your home or office may be your best option until the emergency is resolved and service is restored. If the only option is to leave, have a backup plan if all transit services are unavailable. Keep a pair of comfortable walking shoes and a map of the local area at work.

## ***Operating Status of the Federal Government***

In an emergency, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will consult with regional authorities and then determine the operating status of the Federal Government in the National Capital Region. OPM will keep the public updated through TV, radio, print, websites, and social media.

To the extent possible, OPM will make dismissal and closure announcements prior to the beginning of the workday. This will not only reduce morning traffic, but also lessen the commuting burden later in the day if weather conditions deteriorate and OPM announces their early release policy.

In some situations, each agency has the authority and responsibility to take immediate action to protect its employees from imminent danger without approval from OPM. Examples include fires, localized flooding or

power outages, loss of water, gas leak, or building damage after an earthquake.

In December 2011, OPM announced three new policies to promote the continuity of government and to ensure the safety of Federal employees and the general public. The new options are expected to be used in specific circumstances. The three new options include:

- ***Staggered Early Departure with Final Departure Time:*** Federal employees should depart [an announced number of hours] earlier than their normal departure times and may request unscheduled leave to depart prior to their staggered departure times.
- ***Shelter in Place:*** Federal offices in the Washington, D.C. area are under shelter in place procedures.
- ***Immediate Departure:*** Federal employees should depart immediately.

For the latest information on the Federal Government operating status, visit [www.opm.gov/status](http://www.opm.gov/status) or call (202) 606-1900.

Official OPM Social Media Pages:

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/usopm](http://www.facebook.com/usopm)

- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/usopm](http://www.twitter.com/usopm)

### ***Telework and Human Resources Options***

Human resources options may be available to assist federal employees affected by severe weather conditions or other emergencies. This may include leave flexibilities, alternate work schedules, telework prior to an evacuation order, and evacuation assistance.

Telework is an important tool for agencies to continue operations when Federal offices are closed to the public, including during emergency situations, adverse weather conditions, natural disasters, and other incidents that disrupt government operations.

It is important that the Federal Government remain in operation even if offices are closed to the public. “Unscheduled telework” is a relatively new flexibility that allows more Federal employees to work from home, to the extent practicable, when severe weather conditions or other circumstances disrupt or prevent employees from commuting or reporting to work.

For more information visit:

- [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov)
- [www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/emerg.asp](http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/emerg.asp)



## *Make A Plan*

[www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan in advance. Decide what you and your family would do if your daily routines are disrupted by an emergency. You might not be able to communicate with your family, and if an emergency occurs during the workday, you might not be able to return home right away.

Your family should discuss and agree on certain default actions **before a disaster** in case you cannot communicate. Plan together what each person will do, where everyone will go, and how to get there.

Pick **two** family meeting locations: a place **right outside your home**, in case of a localized emergency (such as a house fire), and a place **outside your neighborhood**, in case you cannot return home or must evacuate the area. Then make sure each family member has a plan to get to your family meeting spots.

Learn about potential emergencies that could impact your community and the appropriate ways to respond to each. In addition, learning about the local emergency plans for sheltering or evacuation will help you develop your own household emergency plan. (See page 26 for links to additional resources.)

## *Family Communications Plan*

If an emergency occurs while you are at work, you may not have time or be able to contact your family right away. In addition, **telephone systems may be damaged or overloaded** with calls.

Consider a plan where each family member calls, emails, or sends a text message to the same out-of-town friend or relative. It may be easier to make a long distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in the best position to communicate among separated family members.

If traditional landline or cell phone systems are overloaded, you may still be able to send a text message, use email, or access social media sites (e.g., Facebook or Twitter).

Before a disaster:

- Choose an **out-of-town friend or relative** that all family members will contact if separated.
- Prepare and share an **emergency contact list** with the numbers and email addresses for friends, neighbors, babysitters, caregivers, and schools.

- Be sure all family members know how to **send and receive a cell phone text message**.
- Determine how to communicate with family members without electronic communications devices.

## *Schools, Daycares, and Assisted Living Centers*

Ask about the emergency plans in place at the schools, daycare centers, or assisted living centers you visit or use. Find out how these institutions will communicate with family members or caregivers in an emergency.

- Are there scenarios in which the building might be locked down?
- If the building is evacuated, where will your children or family members go?
- Are emergency supplies stored at the school and can you supply a kit with items specifically for your child?

Be sure the school, daycare center, or assisted living center knows how to contact you in an emergency, and prepare a list of family members or caregivers who are authorized to pick up your children or family members in an emergency if you are unavailable.

## ***Pets***

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

If you are at work when an emergency occurs, you may not be able to care for your pet. Designate a family member who will care for your pet or considering having a friend or neighbor care for your pet.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you. However, if you are going to a public shelter, understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for you and your pets.

## ***Individuals with Disabilities or Access/Functional Needs***

Each person's needs and abilities are unique, but every individual can take important steps to prepare for all kinds of emergencies. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan, you can be better prepared for any situation.

If you or someone close to you needs additional assistance due to a disability or other functional or access needs, find out what services may be available in your community. Register in advance with the office of emergency management, the local fire department, other government agencies, or non-profit groups.

Tell them of your individual needs or those of a family member, and find out what assistance, help, or services can be provided.

- Plan to make it on your own, at least for a period of time. It's possible that you will not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore.
- Identify what kind of resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if they are limited or not available.
- Create your own personal support network by identifying others who will help you.
- Review your building's OEP for special procedures and speak to your emergency coordinator if you have any questions or concerns.

If an emergency occurs during the workday, you may not be able to care for elderly family members or others who require your assistance. Develop a support network with other family members, friends, or neighbors who can assist.

For more information visit:

- **[www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs](http://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs)**
- **[www.disabilitypreparedness.gov/ppp/workprep.htm](http://www.disabilitypreparedness.gov/ppp/workprep.htm)**



## *Build A Kit*

[www.ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit)

A disaster supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Assemble your kit prior to an emergency because you probably will not have time to search or shop for supplies when it occurs.

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantities to last for at least 72 hours.

Basic services such as electricity, gas, water, telephones, and internet may be unavailable for days or even weeks. Your kit will be essential during these utility outages.

### *At Home*

Recommended items include:

- Water (one gallon per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation)
- Food (at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food)
- Manual can opener for food
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert (and extra batteries for both)
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle (to signal for help)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)

- Maps of the local area
- Cell phone charger, inverter, or solar charger
- Important documents (such as copies of insurance policies, identification and proof of address, financial records, list of allergies or known medical conditions, and emergency contact information)

Additional items than can be useful:

- Prescription medications and an extra pair of glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Extra cash
- Extra clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and sturdy shoes
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Duct tape and plastic sheeting
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Work gloves
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

Assemble these items in one

place and keep your kit where it is easily accessible. Your items should be stored in a container that is easy to find and easy to carry. If one big container is too difficult to move, consider two smaller containers.

### *At Work*

In addition to assembling a kit at home, you should keep a kit of personal emergency supplies at work. Be sure your kit will be accessible and has the items you need if you must shelter in place in your building.

Suggested items include:

- Water and non-perishable food
- Change of clothing
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Prescription medications
- Personal hygiene items
- Rain gear
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- First aid kit
- Whistle (to attract attention)
- Dust mask (to help filter contaminated air)
- Copies of important documents (such as insurance and medical information)
- Emergency contact information

You may also want to include a map of the local area. Even if you know the area around your office fairly well, in an emergency, you may find yourself looking for resources you do not normally use at work.

Consider keeping all your items in a large, airtight plastic bag so the contents can stay clean, dry, and free from harmful contaminants. Be sure your emergency supplies will be ready when you need them.

### *In Your Car*

If you have a car, you should also keep a kit of basic emergency supplies in your vehicle.

Consider some of the same items you have in your emergency kits at home and work, such as water, non-perishable food, a first aid kit, and flashlight with extra batteries. You may also want to include jumper cables, flares, and a car cell phone charger.

If winter weather is forecasted, consider adding a warm blanket, ice scraper, shovel, and sand or grit for traction.

If your vehicle becomes stuck, be aware that carbon monoxide can build up in the vehicle if the engine is running and the exhaust pipe becomes blocked by snow.

### *Maintaining Your Kits*

After you have assembled your kits, be sure to check them every six months and replace expired or outdated items. Check batteries and expiration dates of food, water, and medication. A good time to check your kits is in the spring and fall when you test your smoke alarms and change your clocks for Daylight Saving Time.

### *Starter Kits*

If the idea of putting together an emergency preparedness kit seems like a daunting task, you may want to consider buying a pre-packaged starter kit. Many kits can be purchased pre-assembled from a number of non-profit organizations and local retailers. However, whether purchasing a starter kit or assembling your own, be sure to customize your kit to meet your own individual needs.





# Get Involved

[www.ready.gov/get-involved](http://www.ready.gov/get-involved)

You can play an active role in preparing your home, office, or community. For example:

- Volunteer to join your building's Occupant Emergency Team.
- Take a CPR or first aid class.
- Be part of the emergency planning process in your community. Connect with your local community preparedness planning group, Citizen Corps Council, or local office of emergency management.
- Enroll in free online training at [www.training.fema.gov](http://www.training.fema.gov).

You can also play an active role in disaster response.

Here are a few ways you can help:

- Volunteer to support disaster efforts in your community. Get trained and volunteer with a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps unit, or Citizen Corps partner or affiliate organization.
- Join or support volunteer organizations like the American Red Cross in the National Capital Region or other faith-based or community organizations. Be sure to affiliate yourself with an organization and get the necessary training **before** your help is needed in a disaster.

# *Additional Resources*

## Federal Emergency Management Resources

- Are You Ready? A Guide for Citizen Preparedness: [www.fema.gov/areyouready](http://www.fema.gov/areyouready)
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)
- Citizen Corps: [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)
- FEMA: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- Flu Guidance: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)
- Ready: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- U.S. Office of Personnel Management: [www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/emerg.asp](http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/emerg.asp)

## State Emergency Management Resources

- District of Columbia: [www.dcema.dc.gov](http://www.dcema.dc.gov)
- Maryland: [www.mema.state.md.us](http://www.mema.state.md.us)
- Virginia: [www.vaemergency.com](http://www.vaemergency.com)

## Regional Resources

- American Red Cross (National Capital Region): [www.redcrossnca.org](http://www.redcrossnca.org)
- Capital Alerts: [www.capitalert.gov](http://www.capitalert.gov)
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments: [www.mwco.org](http://www.mwco.org)
- NCR News and Information: [www.capitalregionupdates.gov](http://www.capitalregionupdates.gov)

## Social Media Resources

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/](http://www.twitter.com/)

- DC\_HSEMA\_KK
- FEMA
- MDMEM
- MetroOpensDoors
- MWCOG
- RedCrossNCR
- USOPM
- VDEM

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)

- American-Red-Cross-In-The-Nation-Capital-Region
- DCHSEMA
- FEMA
- MDMEMA
- MWCOG
- USOPM
- WMATA
- VAEmergency

# *Preparedness Checklist*

- Sign up for emergency alerts at [www.capitalalert.gov](http://www.capitalalert.gov).
- Visit [www.capitalregionupdates.gov](http://www.capitalregionupdates.gov) and bookmark the site.
- Visit [www.weather.gov/nwr/](http://www.weather.gov/nwr/) for information on NOAA Weather Radio.
- Familiarize yourself with your building's Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP).
- Know at least two shelter-in-place locations at work.
- Know two evacuation routes from work and where to assemble outside.
- Post the emergency numbers for law enforcement or security personnel next to your phone at work, and program them into your cell phone.
- Visit [www.72hours.dc.gov](http://www.72hours.dc.gov) to input your address and receive a personalized evacuation map for the District of Columbia.
- If you normally drive to work, learn alternate routes home, and be prepared to walk or take public transportation. If you normally use public transportation, learn about alternate routes, lines, and service providers.
- To report an emergency, suspicious activity, or unattended packages in the Metro system, call Metro Transit Police at (202) 962-2121.
- For the latest information on the federal government operating status, visit [www.opm.gov/status/](http://www.opm.gov/status/) or call (202) 606-1900.
- Pick two family meeting locations: one right outside your home, and one outside your neighborhood. Make sure each family member has a plan to get to your family meeting spots.
- Choose an out-of-town friend or relative that all family members will contact if separated.
- Be sure all family members know how to send a cell phone text message.
- Prepare a family emergency contact list with the numbers and e-mail addresses for friends, neighbors, babysitters, caregivers, and schools.
- Ask about the emergency plans in place at the schools, daycare centers, or assisted living centers you visit or use.
- Build a kit of basic emergency supplies for home and work.
- Keep basic emergency supplies in your car.
- Get involved! Play an active role in preparing your home, office, or community, and see how you can volunteer to help after a disaster.