

# Emergency Preparedness is Everyone's Responsibility.

Emergencies can be sudden or unexpected, such as tornadoes or car bombs. Other times emergencies can be predicted, such as flooding and snow storms.

You may need to survive on your own for a few days after an emergency. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone immediately. It might take days for you to get help, especially if roads are blocked and power is out.



## To get ready for emergencies, follow these three steps:

### 1. **Make a plan** for what you will do, and talk about it with your family. You may not be together when the emergency happens, so it is important to plan now.

- Choose an out-of-town friend or relative to be your family's point of contact. This means each of your family members will call, or e-mail or text the same person if an emergency happens to let that person know they are OK. During emergencies, it may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than a local phone call, so choose an out-of-town contact who can communicate among separated family members.
- Know where you will go if you have to leave your area. This may be a friend or relative's house, a hotel or a public shelter. If you have a pet, be sure these places will accept pets. Choose several places in different directions.
- Keep important phone numbers with you. Write them down. Don't rely on your cell phone for keeping these numbers in case there is no power for charging your phone.
- Talk to your children's schools and your employer about their emergency plans.
- Write down your family plan. Go to [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov) to print out a form.

### 2. **Get a kit** of emergency supplies. Have enough to last at least three days. Put items in waterproof containers that you can carry. Start with these:

- Water, one gallon per person per day
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned goods and packaged foods.
- A battery-powered or hand-crank radio with NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries.



## Then add:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Manual can opener if kit contains canned food
- First-aid kit
- A written list of prescriptions and doctors and at least a week's supply of medications
- Toilet paper, soap, plastic garbage bags, moist towelettes for personal hygiene
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members
- Food and water for your pets
- Whistle to signal for help
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to safely stay where you are ("shelter in place")
- Go to [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov) for a detailed checklist of emergency supplies.



3.

**Stay informed** about what might happen. Listen to local information before, during and after a disaster. Local TV and radio will provide:

- Weather information.
- Any orders to evacuate.
- Details about evacuation routes.
- Locations of evacuation shelters.
- How to safely stay where you are.
  - If officials say the air is bad and you need to shelter in place, quickly bring family and pets inside. Lock doors and close windows and air vents. Turn off air conditioning, fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into a room you have selected to seal off.
  - Use plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal the room's windows, doors and air vents. Cut pieces several inches larger than the space you want to cover so you can tape it flat against the wall. Consider cutting the plastic sheeting and labeling the pieces before you have to use them.
  - Make sure your battery-powered radio is working, and listen for instructions.
- To learn more about the types of emergencies that can affect people living in Virginia, go to [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov) and click on "Stay informed".

Prepare your family for weather-related emergencies and those that are man-made. People who live in America need to know what to do during an emergency. Take time now to protect your family. Make a plan. Get a kit. Stay informed.

---

---

For more information go to [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov),  
call free **1-866-782-3470**, or write to [pio@vdem.virginia.gov](mailto:pio@vdem.virginia.gov).

---

---

**Make a plan.**  
**Get a kit.**  
**Stay informed.**