Evacuation Fact Sheet

Emergency Shelters

If you are told to evacuate your home, where do you go? Your community may open an emergency shelter or there may be a larger regional shelter nearby.

Shelters are typically located in schools that provide a large "safe" area inside a sturdy building.

General population shelters are stocked with basic necessities for survival including food, water, and a warm place to sleep. Shelters may be crowded, boring, noisy, short-staffed and offer little or no privacy. A shelter will not have the same level of convenience as a friend or family member's home or a hotel.

If the shelter does not accept pets, be sure to make other arrangements for your animals. Find a pet friendly hotel, board your pet with a private kennel or veterinarian or find a friend or relative willing to take care of your pet during an emergency. Do this BEFORE a disaster strikes. Never leave your pets behind.

What to Take if you Evacuate

1.) Prescription medications: Bring a two week supply of your medications in the original containers. If your medication needs to be refrigerated, bring it in a small cooler with ice. Remember to bring the following:

• All medical equipment and supplies (oxygen tanks, etc.) required to sustain the special needs of an individual for a minimum of two weeks, including supplier's contact information.

• Medical information including the name and phone number of medical provider/doctor, home health agency, copies of your medical insurance and/or Medicare and Medicaid cards.

• Back up energy sources for essential medical equipment.

2.) Special Needs: Bring special dietary foods (non-perishable), baby foods, diapers, assistive equipment, etc.

3.) Clothing: You should pack clothing for one week. If it is during the winter months pack warm clothes in case the power in the shelter goes out.

4.) Personal care items: Bring towels, washcloths, soap, toiletries, feminine hygiene items, etc.

5.) Pack spare eyeglasses and contacts including supplies like contact case and solution.

6.) Games & Toys: Shelters offer little

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to no amusement. Pack quiet games and "favorite" toys for children and pets to minimize the stress of being in the shelter.

7.) Identification & Important Documents: Store important papers such as identification, insurance cards, immunization records, deeds, titles, and keepsakes in a safe deposit box or waterproof container. If you are evacuating and you have stored these documents in your home, take them with you.

If You Evacuate:

• Turn off all utilities if you are told to do so by the authorities.
• Once you are told to do so – evacuate immediately.
• Stick to designated evacuation routes. If you need help, this is the most likely place you will find it.
• Take your most reliable vehicle and avoid taking multiple vehicles.

How do I prepare for my pets?

You should have an emergency supply kit for your pet, just like the one you have for your family. The kit should contain at least a 3 day supply of food and water (7 days is recommended), medicines & medical records, first aid, identification tags, leash, collar, documentation of registration, adoption, and vaccination, crate or pet carrier, litter box, litter, and poop bags, and finally a picture of you and your pet.

For more information on preparing your pets for an emergency please visit:

http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/animals.htm
http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/pets.html

Plan Ahead

In addition to having a Family Communication Plan, these other steps can help you be more prepared if there is an emergency or disaster that causes you to have to evacuate your home.

1.) Plan to Evacuate: Have supplies ready in your car or in a backpack in case you must leave your home. Pack lightly and include basic supplies for 24-48 hours.

2.) Plan for your Pets: People often report not wanting to evacuate because no pre-planning was done for their animals.

3.) Plan to help others: Remember to help neighbors or loved ones who require additional assistance.

How do I prepare a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan for my family?

To design your family emergency preparedness plan please visit:

http://www.ready.gov/america/_downloads/familyemergencyplan.pdf

(Also available in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, French, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, Urdu, and Vietnamese).

For more information please visit our website:
http://www.region4b.org/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx