

## If Disaster Strikes

### Remain calm and be patient.

- Put your Emergency Plan into action.
- Check for injuries. Give first aid and call 911 only for life-threatening emergencies.
- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- Evacuate, if advised to do so. Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.

### Check your home for damage.

- Use flashlights. Do not light matches or candles.
- Do not turn on electrical switches until you rule out damage.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell, hear, or see gas, or suspect a gas leak, turn off the main gas valve, open the windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately.

### Remember to...

- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact. Do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those living alone, or those who are elderly or disabled.
- Stay away from downed power lines.



The American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services want individuals and families to be prepared for all types of emergencies. We believe that emergency preparedness can save lives and we encourage everyone to take as many of the steps in this pamphlet as possible to help ensure their own safety.



To find out more about emergency preparedness visit [www.redcrossLA.org](http://www.redcrossLA.org), [www.labt](http://www.labt) or [www.ladhs.org](http://www.ladhs.org).

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## Family Emergency Plan

**E**mergencies can happen at any time, often with no warning. Some emergencies can force a family to evacuate their home; others may force whole neighborhoods to be evacuated, while still others may require families to stay in their homes for days. Emergencies don't always happen in the evening when families are at home, they may occur while you are at work and children are at school. If you are forced to evacuate your home or basic services such as water, gas, electricity or telephones were cut off, would you and your family know what to do?

Families are best prepared to cope with emergencies by preparing emergency plans in advance. Everyone needs a plan for work, school and home because knowing what to do is your best protection and an important responsibility



## Create an Emergency Plan



- Discuss what types of emergencies are mostly likely to happen in your area. Discuss what to do in each case.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Pick two places to meet:**
  1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
  2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Everyone must know their emergency contact addresses and phone numbers.
- Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to be your "family contact."
- After a major disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Family members should call this person and tell them where they are.
- Ask about animal care during and after a disaster. Pets are not allowed inside emergency shelters or in some hotels. Contact your local humane society for additional information. Plan how to take care of your pets.
- Discuss any special needs family members may have. For example, the elderly and persons with disabilities may need additional assistance evacuating or may have special needs once in a shelter.
- Find out about the emergency plans at your workplace, your children's school or daycare center and other places where your family spends time. Make sure all family members are aware of the different plans.



What will you do if disaster strikes?



Family  
Emergency Plan



## Complete This Checklist

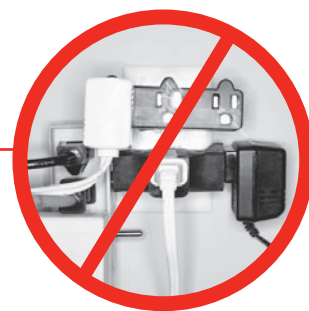
- Post emergency telephone numbers (fire, police, ambulance, family contact, etc.) by all telephones.
- Teach children how and when to call 911 for emergency help.
- Show all responsible family members how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches. Keep the necessary tools near the gas and water shut-off valves. Only shut the gas off if you see, smell, or hear gas. If you turn the gas off, you'll need a professional to turn it back on.
- Teach each family member how to use a fire extinguisher and show them where it's kept.
- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Assemble an Emergency Supplies Kit.
- Take an American Red Cross First Aid and CPR class.

### Practice and Maintain Your Plan

**Practice your fire and emergency evacuation plans at least twice a year.**

**Replace the water and food in your Emergency Supplies Kit every six months.**

**Test your smoke alarms monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.**



- Check electrical outlets. Do not overload outlets.
- Install smoke alarms. Clean and test smoke alarms once a month. Change batteries at least once a year.
- Keep a whistle in each bedroom to awaken household members in case of a fire.
- Purchase an A-B-C type fire extinguisher.
- Have a collapsible ladder on each upper floor of your house.
- Consider installing home sprinklers.

**Fill out, copy and distribute to all family members**

**Emergency Meeting Place** (outside your home) :

**Meeting Place** (outside your neighborhood) :

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Contact:**

**Phone (Day)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (Evening)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Telephone Numbers**

*In a life-threatening emergency, dial 911 or the local emergency medical services system number.*

**Police Department:**

**Fire Department:**

**Hospital:**

**Family Physician:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fire Safety

- Plan two escape routes out of each room.
- Teach family members to stay low to the ground when escaping from a fire.
- Teach family members never to open doors that are hot. In a fire, feel the bottom of the door with the back of your hand. If it is hot, do not open the door. Use your other way out of the room.

**In a fire or other emergency, you may need to evacuate your house, apartment or mobile home on a moment's notice. You should be ready to get out fast.**

Develop an escape plan by drawing a floor plan of your residence. Indicate the location of emergency supplies (Emergency Supplies Kit), fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, collapsible ladders, first aid kits and utility shut off points.

Next use a color pen to draw a broken line charting at least two escape routes from each room. Mark a place outside your home where household members should meet.

Practice emergency evacuation drills at least two times each year.



## Important Family Documents

**Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container**

- Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)



## Hazard Hunt

**In a disaster, ordinary items in the home can cause injury and damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire is a potential hazard.**

- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections.
- Fasten shelves securely.
- Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.
- Secure water heater. Strap to wall studs.
- Repair cracks in ceilings or foundations.
- Store weed killers, pesticides and flammable products away from heat sources.
- Place oily polishing rags or waste in covered metal cans.
- Clean and repair chimneys, flue pipes, vent connectors and gas vents.



**Don't hang pictures and mirrors above beds.**