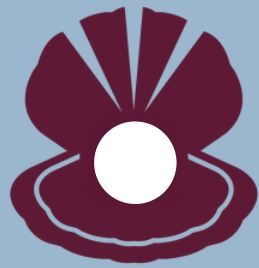


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## 2024 Stay Prepared Natural Disaster Toolkit

Taking action now may  
give you and your family  
the power to protect  
yourselves and your  
property.

Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information



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**Mission:** The Lambda Theta Alpha Foundation's mission is to advance the community. Our efforts promote enrichment of our communities through our pillar approach, focusing on education and natural disaster preparedness and relief.

**Stay Prepared Toolkit:** This toolkit is designed to help every U.S. citizen, from coast to coast, prepare for emergencies. It covers common natural and human-made disasters and offers tools to protect yourself, your family, and your property.



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## Understanding Natural Disasters:

- **Hurricanes:**

- Occur primarily along the East Coast and the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes can cause extensive flooding, high winds, and storm surges.
- Preparation Tip: Know your evacuation routes. Have a plan to evacuate if local authorities issue an order.

- **Tornadoes:**

- Most common in the central U.S. (Tornado Alley), tornadoes can strike with little warning and cause severe destruction.
- Preparation Tip: Identify a safe room or storm cellar in your home where your family can take shelter during a tornado.

- **Wildfires:**

- Particularly prevalent in the Western U.S., wildfires can spread rapidly due to dry conditions and strong winds.
- Preparation Tip: Create a defensible space around your home by clearing brush and flammable materials.

- **Floods:**

- Can occur in any region, often as a result of heavy rainfall or hurricanes. Flash floods can happen suddenly and with little warning.
- Preparation Tip: Know if you live in a flood-prone area and have a plan to move to higher ground if needed.

- **Earthquakes:**

- Most common on the West Coast and in parts of Alaska. Earthquakes can happen without warning and may cause significant structural damage.
- Preparation Tip: Secure heavy furniture to the walls and practice “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” drills with your family.

- **Winter Storms:**

- Affect the Northern and Central U.S., bringing heavy snow, ice, and freezing temperatures that can disrupt daily life.
- Preparation Tip: Keep an emergency kit stocked with winter essentials and learn how to safely heat your home if power goes out.



## Stay Informed:

**Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA):** Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) are short emergency messages from authorized federal, state, local, tribal and territorial public alerting authorities that can be broadcast from cell towers to any WEA-enabled mobile device in a locally targeted area.

WEAs can be sent by state and local public safety officials, the National Weather Service, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the President of the United States.

**Emergency Alert System (EAS):** The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national public warning system that allows the president to address the nation within 10 minutes during a national emergency. State and local authorities may also use the system to deliver important emergency information such as weather information, imminent threats, AMBER alerts and local incident information targeted to specific areas.

## Community Tools:

- Sign up for local alert systems like CodeRED to receive emergency notifications specific to your area.
- Use apps like *Nextdoor* for community updates and *Zello* for push-to-talk communication during emergencies.



## Basic Emergency Kit:

### Essential Supplies:

- Water: One gallon per person per day for at least three days (minimum of 3 days, ideally up to 14 days).
- Non-Perishable Food: Enough to last at least three days, including:
  - Canned goods (vegetables, beans, meat)
  - Energy bars and granola bars
  - Dried fruits and nuts
  - Baby food and formula (if applicable)

### First Aid Kit:

- Include items such as:
  - Adhesive bandages in various sizes
  - Sterile gauze pads and adhesive tape
  - Antiseptic wipes and antibiotic ointment
  - Pain relievers (e.g., ibuprofen, acetaminophen)
  - Any personal medications and prescriptions.

### Tools and Safety Items:

- Flashlight: Preferably with extra batteries.
- Whistle: For signaling for help if trapped.
- Multi-tool: A Swiss Army knife or a similar multi-purpose tool.
- Dust Masks: To help filter contaminated air.
- Plastic Sheeting and Duct Tape: To create a shelter if necessary.
- Emergency Radio:
- A battery-powered or hand-crank NOAA Weather Radio to receive emergency updates and alerts.

### Personal Hygiene Items:

- Hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, toilet paper, and sanitary napkins.

### Documents and Cash:

- Copies of important documents (insurance, identification, bank info) stored in a waterproof container.
- Cash

### Clothing and Bedding:

- Sturdy shoes and clothing layers (include weather-appropriate items).
- Blankets or sleeping bags for warmth.

### Miscellaneous Items:

- Books, games, or puzzles: To keep children entertained.
- Local maps: In case of GPS failure or lack of service.
- Pet supplies: If you have pets, include food, water, leash, and any necessary medications in your kit.



# Make A Plan

## Create Your Personalized Family Emergency Plan:

- **Emergency Contacts:**
  - Compile a list of essential contacts, including family members, neighbors, and out-of-state relatives. Include multiple ways to reach each person (phone, email, social media).
  - **Preparation Tip:** Share this list with everyone in your household and keep a copy in your emergency kit.
- **Meeting Places:** Designate safe meeting spots.
  - *Near Home:* Choose a landmark (like a park) within walking distance.
  - *Within the Neighborhood:* Select a local school or community center as a secondary meeting point.
  - *Outside of Town:* Pick a location that is familiar to all family members in case you need to evacuate.

## Special Considerations:

- **Children:**
  - Prepare a child-friendly emergency kit with snacks, games, and comfort items (e.g., favorite toy or blanket).
  - Discuss the emergency plan with children, explaining what to do in various situations.
- **Seniors & Disabled Individuals:**
  - Plan for any special medical needs, such as oxygen tanks, medications, or mobility aids.
  - Establish a network of friends or neighbors who can help during emergencies.
- **Pets:**
  - Identify pet-friendly shelters and include their needs in your emergency plan. Prepare an emergency pet kit that includes food, water, medications, leashes, and identification.

## Evacuation vs. Shelter-in-Place:

### Evacuate:

- If local authorities order an evacuation, follow their instructions promptly. Know multiple routes to your evacuation destination.
- **Preparation Tip:** Keep your vehicle's gas tank at least half full, and have a packed “go bag” ready to grab at a moment’s notice.

### Shelter-in-Place:

- When advised to shelter in place, move to a designated safe room, ideally away from windows and exterior doors. Stock this room with necessary supplies.
- **Preparation Tip:** Create a “shelter-in-place kit” that includes water, non-perishable food, a flashlight, a battery-operated radio, and a first aid kit.



## Other Action Steps

### Home Preparedness:

- **Home Assessment:**
  - Evaluate your home for vulnerabilities based on your region's most likely disasters.
    - For Hurricanes: Check for sturdy windows and doors. Consider installing storm shutters.
    - For Earthquakes: Secure heavy furniture and appliances to walls to prevent tipping during shaking.
    - For Floods: Elevate utilities (like electrical panels) and install sump pumps in basements.
  - **Preparation Tip:** Schedule regular home maintenance checks to address potential issues before disasters strike.
- **Fire Safety:**
  - Install smoke detectors on every floor and test them monthly. Replace batteries at least once a year.
  - Create and practice a fire escape plan, ensuring all family members know two ways out of each room.
  - **Preparation Tip:** Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and near sleeping areas.

### Protecting Your Property

Prior to a disaster, take steps to mitigate risks and minimize potential damage to your home:

- **Structural Mitigation:** While most structural changes should be performed by professionals, consider hiring experts for significant renovations.
- **DIY Techniques:** There are many do-it-yourself measures you can take, such as:
  - *Trimming Trees:* Remove dead branches and keep trees well-maintained to prevent damage during storms.
  - *Installing Shutters:* Use storm shutters or plywood to protect windows during hurricanes.
  - *Anchoring:* Secure manufactured homes to their foundations to withstand strong winds.
  - *Creating a Safe Room:* Designate a safe space in your home, such as a basement or interior room, to use during tornadoes or severe storms.

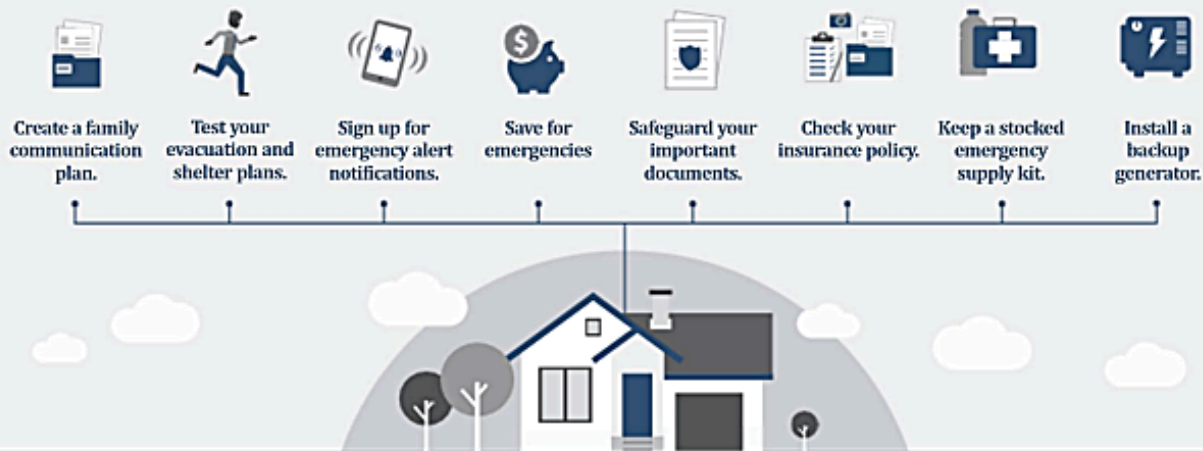
Since you do not know where you will be when an emergency happens, prepare supplies for home, work, and vehicles. Have separate, smaller sets of emergency supplies for your vehicle and workplace to last at least 24 hours in case you need to stay where you are. Include any essential medications in all supply kits.

### Know Your Insurance Policy

- Depending on your location and the types of disasters you may face, review your insurance options.
- Ensure your homeowners or renters insurance policy covers relevant natural disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, or earthquakes.
- **Flood Insurance:** Be aware that flood insurance is often a separate policy and may be required if you live in a flood-prone area.
- **Preparation Tip:** Contact your insurance agent to discuss coverage options and ensure you have adequate protection.



## Building a Prepared Home



## Practice Your Disaster Plans

Make a schedule to practice, update, and tailor your plans. Take the following actions regularly:

- Test your evacuation and shelter plan.
- Test your communication plan.
- Refresh your emergency supplies (at least every six months).
- Hold an emergency response drill.
- Keep your critical documents safe and updated.
- Review your inventory (update as your belongings change).
- Have an insurance checkup.

### The following is a proposed one-year timeline for implementing your disaster plan:

**MONTH 1:** Sign up for CPR and first aid training, as well as other hazard-specific training offered in your area or online.

**MONTH 2:** Make and document a customized plan for your family. Consider the impact to your plan if multiple hazards occur at the same time, such as a pandemic and hurricane or an earthquake and tsunami.

**MONTH 3:** Build your financial savings, and keep a small amount of cash at home in a safe place.

**MONTH 4:** Test your evacuation and shelter plan. Participate in a preparedness drill.

**MONTH 5:** Test your Family Emergency Communication Plan.

**MONTH 6:** Safeguard your important documents.

**MONTH 7:** Plan with your neighbors and community leaders.

**MONTH 8:** Find ways to make your home safer.

**MONTH 9:** Make sure that everyone in your household knows where to go during different types of disasters.

**MONTH 10:** Assemble or update supplies.

**MONTH 11:** Get involved in your community.

**MONTH 12:** Document and insure property. Purchase flood insurance or other relevant coverage.



# Recovering From A Disaster

## Evaluate Any Damages

Once local officials deem it safe to return to the premise, evaluate any damages.

- Be aware of new safety issues created by the disaster. Watch for washed out roads, contaminated buildings, contaminated water, gas leaks, broken glass, damaged electrical wiring and slippery floors.
- Walk carefully around the outside and check for loose power lines, gas leaks and structural damage. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering

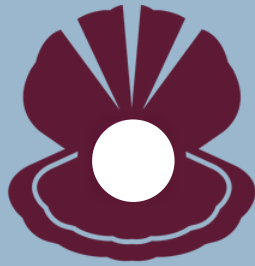
If you have insurance, contact your insurance agent to file a claim.

- Make sure to document all your damages – before you clean up, take photos and make a list.
- Save all your receipts for post-damage repair and clean up.
- If you have insurance and damages, you must file a claim with your insurance company.

## Damages Go Beyond The Physical

Disasters can have a significant impact on your mental health and that of your family, especially if your home, business, or personal property is destroyed. Seek crisis counseling if you or someone in your family is having issues with disaster-related stress. If assistance is available, knowing how to access it makes the process faster and less stressful.

The LTA Foundation provides financial assistance to those impacted by a natural disaster. Each applicant will be required to complete an assistance application and provide documentation to be considered. Our support will be provided on a rolling basis depending on availability of funds. Learn More at [www.ltafoundation.org/natural-disaster](http://www.ltafoundation.org/natural-disaster)



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We hope that this simple guide helps you and your loved ones begin to plan and prepare for emergencies and disasters.

For more in-depth information on how to prepare you can visit these websites for more disaster guides and tips:

- [www.ltafoundation.org/resources](http://www.ltafoundation.org/resources)
- [www.ready.gov/be-informed](http://www.ready.gov/be-informed)
- [www.fema.gov/disaster](http://www.fema.gov/disaster)
- [www.weather.gov/safety](http://www.weather.gov/safety)
- [www.weather.gov/alerts](http://www.weather.gov/alerts)

### **National Resources:**

- **FEMA:** Provides a wealth of information on disaster preparedness, recovery, and federal assistance.
  - Visit: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- **American Red Cross:** Offers training courses, emergency preparedness information, and disaster response.
  - Visit: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- **CDC Emergency Preparedness:** Provides guidelines on health preparedness and safety.
  - Visit: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- **Ready.gov:** A comprehensive resource for individuals and families to prepare for emergencies.
  - Visit: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

### **Emergency Contact List**

#### **Local Emergency Services**

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Ambulance/EMS
- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

#### **Utilities**

- Gas Company
- Electric Company
- Water Utility

#### **Health Services**

- Local Hospital
- Primary Care Physician
- Urgent Care Center

#### **Community Resources**

- Local Red Cross Chapter
- Local Community Center
- Mental Health Crisis Line

#### **Additional Important Contacts**

- Family Members
- Work Contacts
- Neighbors