Shelter in Place

In some emergencies, particularly with chemical, biological or terrorist incidents, local officials may advise you to "shelter in place." If this is the case, gather your family and supplies kit inside. Use a towel or damp cloth to provide some breathing protection. Close all windows, doors and fireplace dampers. Shut off all fans and heating and air conditioning systems. Unless otherwise directed, move to an interior room above ground level and seal window and door cracks and vents with duct tape. Wait for instructions from authorities.

Practice Your Plan

Even the best plan is useless unless it has been practiced and maintained. Routinely review, practice and update your plan.

If Disaster Strikes

- Remain calm and patient.
- Put your emergency plan into action.
- Provide assistance to those with special needs in accordance with your plan.
- Check for injuries.
- Listen to local news for information and instruction.

After the Disaster

- Follow your plan for the specific disaster.
- Listen to news reports for information and instruction.
- Assess the condition of your home using a flashlight, not an open flame.
- Do not enter an unsafe structure.
- Smell for gas leaks, starting with the water heater.
- Shut off any damaged utilities.
- Clean up any hazardous or flammable spills.
- Treat injuries.
- Notify local and out-of-town contacts, then only use the phone to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Document damage for insurance claims.

Quick Reference for Potential Hazards

Fire

- Only fight small fires not in danger of blocking exits.
- Use back of hand to check if doors are hot.
- Crawl under smoke.
- If trapped, close door and hang a sheet from the window.
- Meet at your designated spot.
- Never re-enter a burning building.
- Call 911 from a neighbor's house.

Tornado

- During a watch, be attentive to weather conditions.
- Take immediate shelter if a warning is issued.
- Go to the basement or an internal hallway.
- Avoid windows, glass or potential flying objects.
- Leave windows closed.
- Monitor media and follow directions from local officials.

Flood

- During a watch, prepare to evacuate.
- During a flash flood warning, evacuate immediately.
- Fill empty containers and bathtub with water, in case of contamination.
- Avoid flood waters and areas prone to flooding.
- Never drive onto flooded roads.
- Shut off liquefied petroleum tanks at source.
- Monitor media and follow directions from local officials.

Chemical Release/Biological Event

- Monitor media for instructions: FOLLOW THEM.
- Prepare to evacuate and have shelter in place.
- Stay away from victims until threat is identified.
- Stay upwind; take shallow breaths through a towel.
- Avoid possible contaminated food, water and areas.

Other Resources

American Red Cross	www.redcross.org
Federal Emergency Management Agency	www.fema.gov
Ohio Emergency Management Agency	www.ema.ohio.gov
Ohio Emergency Medical Services	www.ems.ohio.gov
Ohio Homeland Security	www.homelandsecurity.ohio.gov
U.S. Citizens Corps	www.citizencorps.com
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	www.ready.gov

State of Ohio Security Task Force

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OHIO FAMILY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

Distributed by
The City of Gahanna

FIRE
FLOOD
TORNADO
TERRORISM

Remember, Preparation = Survival

Where Will You or Your Family Be When a Disaster Strikes?

You could be anywhere – at work, at school or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe?

Emergencies and disasters can strike quickly and without warning. They can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or they can confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services — water, gas, electricity or telephones — were cut off?

There are some simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away. You can cope with disaster by preparing in advance: identify hazards that could occur and how to respond, get an emergency supply kit and make a family emergency plan.

Stay Informed

Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via emergency radio and television. You also might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call or emergency workers may go door-to-door.

Community Disaster Plans

Learn about community response plans, evacuation plans and designated emergency shelters. Ask about the emergency plans and procedures that exist in places you and your family spend time, such as places of employment, schools and child care centers. If you do not own a vehicle or drive, find out in advance what your community's plans are for evacuating those without private transportation.

Community Warning Systems

Find out how local authorities will warn you of a pending disaster and how they will provide information to you during and after a disaster. Learn about NOAA Weather Radios and their alerting capabilities (www.noaa.gov). Weather radios can be programmed to report weather watches and warnings in your surrounding area. Other reliable sources for weather updates include the Emergency Alert System available on local television and radio stations, The Weather Channel and outdoor warning sirens. In addition, learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your local government.

Assemble a Supplies Kit

A disaster supplies kit is a collection of basic items a family would probably need to stay safe and be more comfortable during and after a disaster. Consider where you live and the unique needs of your family to create your kit. Items should be stored in a portable container as close as possible to the exit door. Review the contents of your kit at least once a year, or as your family needs change. Also, consider having emergency supplies in each vehicle and at your place of employment or other places you spend time.

Recommended Items for a Basic Supplies Kit

- Water: One gallon per person, per day for at least three days.
- Food: At least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit.
- Whistle to signal for help.
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air, and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place.
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation.
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities.
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food).
- Local maps.

Additional Items to Consider

- Prescription medications and glasses.
- Infant formula and diapers.
- Pet food and extra water for your pet.
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container.
- Cash or traveler's checks and change.
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing for cold weather.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Matches in a waterproof container.
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items.
- Kitchen accessories and utensils.
- Paper and pencil.
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children.

Supplies for your vehicle

- Flashlight, extra batteries and maps.
- First aid kit and manual. White distress flag.
- Tire repair kit, booster/jumper cables, pump and flares.
- Bottled water and non-perishable foods such as granola bars.
- Seasonal supplies: Winter – blanket, hat, mittens, shovel, sand, tire chains, windshield scraper, florescent distress flag. Summer – sunscreen, shade item/umbrella, wide brimmed hat, etc.

Make a Family Emergency Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to plan how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in different situations. Explain dangers to children and work with them to prepare. Be sure to include caregivers in your planning efforts.

- Develop a response to each hazard your family might face. Reference the websites listed on the back cover to learn more about the different actions required for different hazards.
- Develop a list of emergency numbers, including someone out-of-town that you can contact following a disaster. Teach children when and how to use these numbers.
- Establish a meeting place immediately outside your home, as well as an out-of-area destination in case you cannot return home immediately.
- Plan for those with disabilities and other special needs. Keep support items in a designated place, so they can be found quickly. In advance, provide the power company with a list of all power-dependent life support equipment required by family members. Develop a contingency plan that includes an alternate power source for the equipment or for relocating the person.
- Plan for your pets. Take your pets with you if you evacuate. However, be aware that pets usually are not permitted in emergency public shelters. Prepare a list of family, friends, boarding facilities, veterinarians and "pet-friendly" hotels that could shelter your pets in an emergency.

Action Checklist – Things to do before a Disaster

- Learn how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves and share this information with your family. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves. Turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged, if you suspect a leak or if local officials instruct you to do so.
- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home. Consider installing a carbon monoxide alarm.
- Be sure everyone knows how to use your fire extinguishers and where they are kept.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage. Homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage and may not provide full coverage for other hazards. Talk with your insurance agent to ensure you have coverage to protect against financial loss.
- Vital family records and other important documents such as birth and marriage certificates, social security cards, passports, wills, deeds, and financial, insurance and immunizations records should be kept in a safe deposit box or other safe location.
- In a disaster, ordinary items in the home can cause injury and damage. Reduce your risk:
  - Have a professional repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections.
  - Place large, heavy objects low to the ground or floor. Hang pictures and mirrors away from beds.
  - Secure tall furniture, large appliances and hanging items.
  - Repair cracks in ceilings and foundations. Secure mobile home foundation.
  - Safely store poisonous or hazardous items.
  - Check for fire hazards.