

# Pima County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

## A Neighborhood Guide for Emergency Preparedness

The events of September 11, 2001 and subsequent bioterrorism acts have reminded us of the importance of emergency preparation. While many people are concerned with being prepared for terrorist-related events, it is important to be prepared for all types of emergencies, such as floods, hazardous materials accidents, and airplane crashes. During disasters, help may be hours or days away. Service providers are often overwhelmed. This guide will help you be better to weather the disaster and help family and neighbors survive until normal services are restored..

This guide will help you work with your neighborhood and with your own family to ensure your preparedness for emergencies. You can learn to respond to a disaster by knowing how to suppress small fires; treat life-threatening injuries until professional help arrives; and help disaster victims cope with their emotional stressors. You should assemble survival supplies; develop an escape plan; and develop a shelter in a secure area of your home, in case authorities ask you to stay indoors during an emergency.

Much of the material here is taken from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and some from other sources, which are listed at the end of this guide. You can visit the sites listed, or call the Pima County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security at 798-0600.

### Before an event:

- Learn first aid techniques, such as those for opening the airway, controlling bleeding, and treating for shock. The Red Cross provides classes at a nominal fee. The Red Cross contact is included on last page.
- Simple fire prevention methods will go far in reducing the likelihood of fires. Locate potential sources of ignition, and do what you can to reduce or eliminate the hazard.
- Learn to operate a fire extinguisher. Learn to put out small fires before they become major fires and to prevent additional fires by removing fuel sources. Neighborhood members should learn to identify fires by type. Class A fires burn ordinary combustibles such as paper, cloth, and wood. Class B fires burn flammable liquids such as oils and gas, and combustible liquids such as charcoal lighter and kerosene. Class C fires involve electrical equipment, and Class D fires involve combustible metals such as magnesium. Identifying the type of fire is important, so the proper method of extinguishing the fire can be chosen. There are five types of extinguishers. They include water, dry chemical, halon, carbon dioxide, and foam. A 10 lb. class ABC fire extinguisher is recommended.

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When neighborhood members see a commercial building that has a multi-colored diamond with numbers in it, they should consider that a "stop sign," and rely on professional firefighters to stop the blaze.

- If you have gas to your home, know where the gas shut-off valve is located. Have the proper tool handy and the know how should you have to turn it off in an emergency.
- You can identify potential hazards in your home, and work to reduce the hazards as much as possible before disaster strikes. Consider how you might limit damage that could occur from falling books, dishes, or other cabinet contents, and how you could limit hazardous products coming within reach of children.
- Limit exposure to hazardous materials by limiting the amount of hazardous materials you store; by isolating products in approved containers and storing them inside enclosed cabinets where they are protected from sources of ignition; and by separating incompatible materials such as chlorine products and ammonia.
- Before a flood strikes, you should: prepare a flood evacuation plan; get flood insurance, if available; keep insurance papers and other valuables in a safe deposit box; and choose a safe area in advance.
- Board or place protective tape on windows and glass doors to minimize flying glass during high winds and microbursts.
- Strap mobile or manufactured homes onto their slabs. Mobile homes are susceptible to damage because they are easily displaced. Utility connections are easily damaged, increasing the risk of fire and electric shock.
- Store enough food and water to supply your family for at least 72 hours. See the list below for other supplies to keep on hand.
  - Store at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day.
  - Keep a few days supply on hand of foods to that will not spoil and that your family will enjoy.
  - If you own a barbecue grill that uses charcoal or bottled gas, make sure you have plenty of fuel. Flammable liquids such as propane and kerosene should not be used or even stored indoors.
- Keep your car's gas tank over half full at all times.

## During an event:

- During a flood, you should heed barricades blocking roads. Do not walk or drive through floodwater. Stay away from bridges when water is covering or nearing the top of the bridge. Keep away from waterways during heavy rain. If you are in a canyon area and hear a warning, get to high ground immediately-leaving your car if necessary.
- Purify your water if it is not municipal water or you are unsure of its source. Municipal water does not need to be purified, even if you've stored it for a few months. The safest way to purify water is by bringing it to a rolling boil for five minutes. Water purification tablets, intended for emergency use only, can make most water free from biological

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contaminants,

- During an emergency, wear appropriate clothes (no shorts or open-toed shoes).
- If possible, fill your bathtub with water for sanitary uses.
- You can make your own makeshift toilet. Line a bucket with a garbage bag and make a toilet seat out of two boards placed parallel to each other across the bucket. After each use, pour a disinfectant such as bleach into the garbage bag. A disinfectant can be created by mixing 1 part liquid chlorine bleach to 10 parts water.
- To stay warm, dress in a few thin layers rather than one thick one.
- Don't use candles for emergency lighting because of the fire hazard. Have a flashlight and plenty of batteries available.

After an event:

If you choose to remain in your home, stay calm and consider the following suggestions.

- Use the supplies and equipment in your emergency kit.
- Identify those in your neighborhood who need shelter and provide it to them.
- Turn off gas, water and electric utilities. If you smell gas or if there is a fire, turn off the gas supply at the meter or at a valve between a meter and the building. Service can be restored only by a trained technician. Never enter the basement of a structure that is on fire to turn off any utility.

Special concerns related to fire:

- If a product produces a noxious odor, smoke, or steam, or if you encounter a product that you cannot identify, leave the area immediately and call 911. Observe the material only from an uphill or upwind location until qualified personnel arrive. Enlist others, if necessary, to help warn of a disaster.
- Before attempting to extinguish a fire, ask yourself whether you can escape quickly and safely from the area if you do attempt to extinguish the fire. Ask whether you have the right type of extinguisher and whether it is large enough for the fire. Also determine whether the area is free from other dangers such as hazardous materials and falling debris. If the answer to any of these is "no," you should leave the building immediately, shutting doors as you leave to slow the spread of the fire.
- If you are using a fire extinguisher, pull the pin on the fire extinguisher, aim at the base of the fire, and squeeze the trigger. Move around the perimeter of the fire using a sweeping motion to maximize coverage of the extinguisher agent. Don't get too close. Work in a buddy system. No one should ever attempt to suppress a fire alone.

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## Supply list for individual families:

- bottled water (1 gallon of drinking water per person per day)
- food
- flashlight and extra batteries
- battery operated radio with extra batteries
- first aid kit
- non-electric can opener
- paper plates, cups and plastic utensils
- water purification tablets
- essential medicines
- cash and credit cards
- extra pair of reading glasses
- extra set of car keys
- list of emergency phone numbers
- special items for pets, disabled persons, infants and the elderly
- extra clothing and sturdy shoes
- blankets/emergency space blanket
- bleach
- waterless hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- garbage bags
- fire extinguisher
- shovel
- waterproof matches
- books and age-appropriate games

## Supply list for organized neighborhood groups:

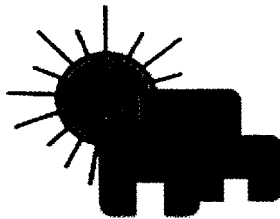
- nylon/canvas bag with shoulder strap for storing emergency items
- water
- dehydrated foods
- water purification tablets
- work gloves (leather)
- note pads
- markers, thin and thick point
- pens
- duct tape
- masking tape (2-inch)
- scissors
- crescent wrench
- first-aid pouch containing 4x4 gauze dressings, abdominal pads, triangular bandages, band-aids, and roller bandages

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- goggles
- dust masks
- flashlights or miner's lamp
- batteries and extra bulbs
- secondary flashlight or light sticks
- utility knife

## Additional information:

- o American Red Cross, <http://redcross.org>
- Tucson Chapter of the American Red Cross, <http://www.tucson-redcross.org>
- o [http://www3.bcsympatico.ca/pearen/ep/sample\\_neighborhood plan.pdf](http://www3.bcsympatico.ca/pearen/ep/sample_neighborhood_plan.pdf)
- Pulitzer Newspaper, Inc., <http://www.pcncommunity.com>
- John A. Martin and Associates, Inc., [http://www.johnmartin.com/egguides/eggui\\_4201htm](http://www.johnmartin.com/egguides/eggui_4201htm)
- City of San Mateo, [http://www.ci.sanmateo.ca.us/downloads/oes/nest\\_augsept-pds](http://www.ci.sanmateo.ca.us/downloads/oes/nest_augsept-pds)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, <http://fema.gov>
- Pima County Health Department, <http://pimahealth.org>



Produced by:  
Pima County Health Department 150  
W. Congress, Tucson AZ 85719  
(520) 798-0600  
[www.pimahealth.org](http://www.pimahealth.org)